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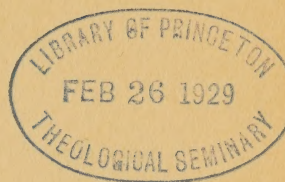


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SIMPLE TALKS ON THE HOLY SPIRIT

Simple Talks on the Holy Spirit

By
REV. D. H. DOLMAN, M.A.



With Introduction by
JAMES M. GRAY, D.D.
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INTRODUCTION

LIKE others whose hair has grown gray in Christian service, I am often asked by authors to write introductions for their books, but oftener than not I feel obliged to answer, Nay. To write an introduction conscientiously, one need not agree with everything the book contains, but at least he should be familiar with its contents and know something of its author. These two qualifications I possess in the present case.

Pastor Dolman is a minister of the Church of England, who years ago was sent by his Church as a missionary to the Jews of Germany, in which service God has greatly blessed him. And God bestowed on him another gift and opened for him another door of service. He gave him a deep experience of the Holy Ghost and taught him how to lead other souls into the same blessing. At conferences not only in Germany, but in Holland, Sweden, the British Isles and the United States, there have been hundreds and perhaps thousands to whom he has thus been an angel of light. As an editor, his pen also has been used in the same way. It was at a conference in Wales fifteen years

ago that he and I first met, and our hearts were knit together in a unity that abides.

Pastor Dolman is not a teacher in the strict sense of the word, but he is a most earnest, a most affectionate and a most successful pleader with the hearts of men. He wins them to Christ and to the dedication of their all to Him. His gift I covet.

“Baptism of the Holy Ghost” and “Pentecostal blessing” are expressions sometimes used, I think, in an unscriptural way, but Pastor Dolman does not so use them. In my opinion, the baptism of the Holy Ghost came upon the disciples on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2) once and forever, and it is of that baptism that all believers partake as soon as they come to Christ by faith. There is no further Pentecostal blessing in that sense of the term, and to teach that there is might lead in some cases to the present-day error of “speaking with tongues,” and some other harmful theories.

But Pastor Dolman means and teaches nothing of this kind. When he speaks of the “baptism of the Holy Ghost” he means the filling of the Holy Ghost, in which all evangelical Christians believe. The reader will see this for himself as he goes through the book. Moreover, several times have I heard Pastor Dolman give the contents of this book in public addresses, and when you listen to him you never question the saneness and the soundness of his faith. And he gets results, as

the saying is; he leads Christian men and women, pastors, missionaries, theological students into the life of victory and joy in the Lord.

It is for this reason that I write this introduction. Pastor Dolman does not claim special scholarship but is beautifully simple in his style, even if not all times orderly in the arrangement of his thoughts. And somehow that has its own value in this instance, as he is always coming at you with an appeal when you are not expecting it, and hence before you know it you have surrendered.

Then he uses an illustration and tells a story well. His story of the proud doctor who was ashamed of his humble mother, and who domiciled her in the attic from the society of his rich wife, is a gem, and it has a telling effect as he applies it in his own way to the truth on which he continually insists.

Pastor Dolman deals directly and intimately with human souls, and wherever his book is sympathetically read it will bring a revival. One cannot get away from his appeal.

JAMES M. GRAY.

Chicago, Ill.

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I

ANOTHER COMFORTER

John 14:16

SOME years ago a great revival broke out amongst the fishing population in Scotland, and I was asked by a Swedish Christian daily paper to go over and report it. I shall never forget what I saw and heard. Whole towns were changed; the saloons were closed, the churches crowded. I have never seen so many shining faces together as in that fortnight in Scotland. It was in February, snow lay thick on the streets, it was bitter cold. Yet for two hours on the market-place I stood listening, in an open-air meeting, to one short bright testimony after another regarding the change which God had wrought in each case. I did not feel the cold; on the contrary, a fire was kindled in my own heart.

Such a revival is not man-made. A genuine revival comes from above, not from beneath. It is the work of the Holy Spirit. There is nothing the Church needs more in our times than a real revival. The human instruments in a revival are not of paramount importance. In the revival in Wales in 1905 it was a young miner; in the revival in

Scotland, three simple fishing-lads, but these lads were endowed with the power of the Holy Spirit.

In these pages I propose to speak in a simple way about the blessed Spirit and His work in the hearts of men. It is a sacred subject; may the Holy Spirit Himself guide my thoughts, and open the hearts of my readers.

"It is a truth I am telling you, it is to your advantage that I go away, for unless I go away the advocate will not come to you" (John 16:7, Weymouth Version). These are striking words. The Lord uttered them in His farewell discourse to His disciples. He told them that the coming of the Holy Spirit was even of more value to them than His bodily presence.

Here let us pause a moment. Had the Holy Spirit, then, not appeared before? Most certainly He had exercised an occasional ministry even under the old dispensation. He had given knowledge and wisdom to Bezaleel, filled him with the Spirit of God to make the vessels of the tabernacle (Exod. 31:3). He had clothed Gideon with strength (Judges 6:34). He had spoken through the prophets. His ministry was, however, of a temporary character; it was restricted to a few individuals, to give them equipment for a special purpose.

The real ministry of the Holy Spirit began at Pentecost. Broadly speaking, we might say that in the Old Testament the work of God the Father and, in the four Gospels, the work of the Son is

most prominent, and that the work of the Holy Spirit stands out in the Acts of the Apostles, which might more properly be called the Acts of the Holy Spirit.

Since Pentecost the Holy Spirit has been always at work. He has been convicting men of sin and showing them the need of a Saviour. It was the Holy Spirit who opened the heart of Lydia. Regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit. Man can do much in his own strength, only he cannot give life to himself. By diligent study he can increase his knowledge and get a cultured mind, but he cannot give himself new birth. The new birth, the Lord said to Nicodemus, is from above. We must be born from above.

We cannot redeem ourselves. The gospel of self-redemption of the modernist is deceptive and leads to bitter disappointment. Only the Holy Spirit is the Giver of Life. The life which the Spirit bestows, He tends and nurtures. We cannot redeem ourselves, neither can we sanctify ourselves. Regeneration and sanctification are the exclusive works of the Holy Spirit. He works in us the new birth, and the holiness without which no man can see the Lord.

"I will pray the father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever" (John 14:16). The Holy Spirit is a person—it is "he," not "it." I shall never forget the Keswick Convention at which Dr. Torrey

spoke about the personality of the Holy Spirit and the wonderful blessing which many of God's children received as they realized this truth. It is "he," not "it." This is not a mere dogmatic quibble, of interest to theologians only; it is a glorious fact, which can influence the whole of our life.

Is the Holy Spirit a person, or a mere influence, a power emanating from God? The answer to this question is of extraordinary importance from a practical standpoint. Electricity is a wonderful and mysterious force; we only gradually begin to know a little about it. Man strives to master it and use it for his purposes. Electricity draws our trains, lights our houses and sends news round the world in eighty seconds.

If the Holy Spirit is a power, I will try to make use of it; if He is a Person, He will want to make use of me. If the Holy Spirit is a power, I shall try to get more of it; if He is a Person, He will want to have more of me, and I must make Him room in my heart and life.

If the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, the third Person in the blessed Trinity, we owe Him also our worship. The Church has almost lost the grace of worship. I belong to a Church in which the doxology is daily used:

"Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to THE HOLY GHOST." Have we always repeated it in a thoughtless way or have we ascribed to the

Holy Spirit the devout adoration which is due to Him as the third person in the Holy Trinity?

"I will pray the father . . . that he shall give you another comforter, even the spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you" (John 14:17). It is He, not it. The Holy Spirit is a Person.

Of course, this does not mean that He has eyes and hands and feet, like a man. That is corporality. We must distinguish between personality and corporality. A person is able to think, to feel and to exercise will-power. All these functions are attributed to the Holy Spirit in Scripture. The Holy Spirit prevented Paul and Barnabas from preaching the word in Asia and would not allow them to journey through Bithynia. They obeyed the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Is not much of our work for the Master fruitless effort because it is not done under the guidance of the Spirit?

The Holy Spirit prays through us with groanings, which cannot be uttered. I have been present at cold prayer meetings, I have been in churches, where the prayer meeting was the least frequented of all, where the minister did not think it necessary to prepare himself—it was only a prayer meeting. I have been present at others, where the prayer meeting was the best of all, when there was power in the prayers and when uncon-

verted came under the power of the Spirit, and the hearts of God's children were set on fire.

A power does not speak. The Spirit speaks to the people (Rev. 2:11). A power does not come to us. "The comforter will come to you" (John 16:7).

The world cannot receive the Spirit—"the comforter will *come* to you." I shall never forget the hour when this truth flashed upon my consciousness. It was at a corner of Sackville Street, Dublin. How is the Holy Spirit to come to the unconverted, if they cannot receive Him? He can only come to them through God's children. And then the question pressed itself upon me: Are you a good conductor of the Holy Spirit? Can He speak through you to your unconverted friends?

I trust it is clear to all my readers that the Holy Spirit is a Person, the third Person in the Holy Trinity. I close this chapter with a very tender passage. "Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and *for the love of the spirit*" (Rom. 15:30).

Have you ever thought of the love of the Holy Spirit? The love of the Father was infinitely great; when He loved, He loved a world. Do you know John 3:16? Listen; let me tell it to you softly. He gave His Son. Have you children of your own? Which would you rather, suffer yourself or see your children suffer? He gave His Son.

The love of the Son, which caused Him to leave glorious Heaven to dwell on this earth amidst selfish, sinful men! Do you understand a little of it? That love led Him to Gethsemane and to the Cross. Having loved His own, He loved them to the end.

The love of the Father, infinite love—without it the world would have been lost. The love of the Son—human language is too feeble to express it. Deeper than the deepest sea! And yet—let me say it very reverently—that great love of the Father would have been in vain—the self-sacrificing love of the blessed Redeemer to no purpose—if it had not been for that great, patient, infinite love of the blessed Spirit working in our hearts. O my soul, canst thou fathom this mystery? All the three Persons of the Holy Trinity at work for the salvation of thy soul!

How patient the Holy Spirit has been, when in my waywardness I refused to listen to Him! How often has He been knocking at the door of my heart! In glad days and sad days He was waiting for me to yield to Him. In sickness and health, at the grave of father and mother, it was the Spirit speaking to my soul. He revealed to me my sins. It was He who opened up to me the word of God, it was He who pointed me to Golgotha and whispered softly in my ears: “Behold the lamb of God, that taketh away the sins of the world.”

It was the Holy Spirit who applied the blessed

truth to my heart; without Him I should have had no assurance of salvation, for it is the Spirit who giveth witness to our spirit, that we are the children of God.

May I close with a loving warning? The Holy Spirit is no blind force; He is a divine Person, who loves you with infinite love.

Beware of grieving the Spirit of God (Eph. 4:30). You can hurt His feelings. Every unkind word, every selfish deed, every impure thought grieves and hurts the Spirit. After an address of Dr. Torrey at Keswick, a young clergyman said to me: "If the Holy Spirit is a Person, who is always near me, it must make all the difference to my life."

A young man had come from a good Christian country home to the large city. The prayers of a saintly mother followed him. Temptation grew fierce and strong. A fellow-student tempted him one evening to go out for a walk. The young blood pulsed in his veins. There are dark streets in the big city, houses which you cannot enter without losing youth's most precious boon. His friend enters one of those houses. He himself has the hand on the handle of the door to follow him. What makes him turn, and run as quickly as he is able, not heeding the mocking laughter of his companion? It is the thought of the mother at home, who at that moment is praying earnestly for her child. Beloved, here is One purer than the most

saintly mother, with more horror of sin and of impurity than the holiest man, the best father on earth, One who loves you with a love, with which the love of the sweetest mother cannot be compared. It is the love of the Holy Spirit. Friends, beware of grieving the Holy Spirit of God, in whom ye have been sealed in preparation for the day of redemption (Eph. 4:30, Weymouth).

II

THE HOLY SPIRIT, THE GIVER OF LIFE

John 3:3

IT was evening. The streets were empty. Most people had already gone to bed. But Nicodemus could not sleep. The conflict within him drove him out of his house. At all costs he must have an answer to the questions which were tormenting his soul.

Who could help him in his trouble? Only one, the young Prophet of Nazareth. But is it not too late now? Timidly he knocks. The door opened immediately. Jesus is always ready to help a soul in need.

Nicodemus was a rich man, held in high esteem among the people. He had a seat in the Great Council. He had education and book-learning. But he lacked one thing—life from God. Jesus told him that he must be born again: “Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God” (John 3:3).

THE NEW BIRTH IS THE WORK OF THE HOLY
SPIRIT

A man can achieve much by his own strength;

but with all his wisdom he cannot be born again. He may enlarge his knowledge by diligent study; he may ennoble his mind by reading good books and through intercourse with other noble minds; but with all this he cannot win for himself the life which is from God. "Seek your own salvation," that is the new Gospel of the modern man. But it only leads to disappointment. If a man had been able to redeem himself, God would not have sacrificed His own Son for our redemption.

Just as a man cannot redeem himself, *so is it impossible for him to create the divine life in others*. Many have tried to do so; but all human endeavour and will is in vain. What pious mother does not long that her child may be converted? Have you not often tried to convert your husband or your children? Have you not lost courage because you saw no success?

An aged brother in Wuppertal said to a young man, whom he was trying to lead to Jesus: "If I had it in my waistcoat pocket, I would give it to you." But we do not carry the divine salvation about in our waistcoat pockets, and it is well that we do not. We might easily lose it. Nor can we hand on salvation to others. It is a gift that comes from God.

The Holy Spirit can do what we are unable to do. He is the Giver of Life. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of re-

generation, and renewing of the Holy Ghost " (Titus 3:3).

We must distinguish between the Saviour's work *for* us and the Holy Spirit's work *in* us. Without the sacrifice upon Golgotha, it would have been impossible for a man to be saved. Without the work of the Holy Spirit it would be equally impossible. The Spirit creates in our hearts the faith through which we can receive salvation.

Of course, the Holy Spirit works through human instruments. In this connection, two passages from the Bible have become particularly significant for me. In St. John 17:17 the Saviour says that the world cannot receive the spirit of truth; and in St. John 16:7 the Lord says that His departure will bring advantage to His disciples, for He will send them the Comforter.

The New Birth is impossible without the Holy Spirit. The world cannot receive the Spirit. How then can the Spirit come to the children of this world? The answer is simple. The Spirit comes to God's children, and through them to the world. God has placed you in your unconverted family so that the Spirit may, through you, come to your unconverted husband or wife and children.

How important it is, then, that we should place no obstacle in the way of God's Spirit! If an electric wire is damaged, the current can no longer pass through it. Dear brother, will you not search your own heart? Perhaps it is there the

fault lies, that your wife and children are not yet converted.

Is it not, indeed, a wonderful thing that the Holy Spirit chooses us weak men and women to be His instruments? Why did not God send the angels as messengers of salvation? They never make excuses, they are always ready, always willing, always happy to be allowed to carry out God's behests. But God, in His inscrutable wisdom, has ordained that those who have been saved shall be the means of saving others. If we study this point throughout the whole of the Acts of the Apostles, if we ask God's children how they found salvation, eternal life, we shall almost always find that God's Spirit has made use of the testimony of one of God's children, either through word or through their life. Has God ever been able to use you for the salvation of a soul?

"The Communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all" (2 Cor. 13:14). Have you realized, my brother minister, how valuable, how indispensable, this fellowship of the Holy Spirit is to us in our work for the Master?

Communion of the Holy Spirit means the partnership of the Holy Spirit. James and John were partners with Simon (Luke 5:10), and you will find that the Greek word used there is the same as in 2 Cor. 13:14. Fellow-minister, may I introduce you to your divine Partner?

While St. Paul was speaking to the women in

Philippi, the Lord opened the heart of Lydia, that she might hear and understand what he was saying (Acts 16:14). The Holy Spirit said to Lydia: "This concerns you; this is meant for you." Naturally she became at once interested in St. Paul's sermon. Had the Holy Spirit not opened Lydia's heart, St. Paul's speech would have been in vain.

But we may be very sure that the Holy Spirit is always ready to play His part. You may count upon it, that the Holy Spirit will put the right words into your mouth. Jesus has promised this: "It shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak" (Matt. 10:19). Remind the Saviour of this promise, when you go up into your pulpit; and as you then, trusting in the Lord, deliver your testimony, you may be certain that the Holy Spirit is doing His imperceptible, mysterious work in the hearts of your audience, while you are speaking.

The consciousness of this co-operation of the Holy Spirit brings joy and strength. I know a minister much blessed and used by God. As a student he was so shy and timid that it was almost impossible for him to speak connectedly for five minutes. His friend asked him if he had not made a mistake in the choice of his profession. After fierce inward conflicts, the young man found peace in Christ. But God did still more for him. He gained an insight into the co-operation of the Holy Spirit, and since then he has, by God's

grace, become a source of strength and of light to thousands.

I believe in the co-operation of the Holy Spirit in my work as I write these reflections, or whenever I do God's work. I know that this co-operation is much more important than any testimony I can give myself—which, indeed, I owe to the Spirit also.

“Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock Horeb, and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it” (Ex. 17:6). I and thou. God and Moses. God first, then Moses.

The people fainted with thirst. Moses' responsibility was great. Was it with clouded brow and a heavy heart that he left the camp to seek the rock? Moses knew that there was someone else watching over the people. It was God. “I will stand before thee.” The eye of faith in Moses perceived God. And now his task was easy. He only had to strike the rock with his staff; his God would do the rest.

Which was easier, to strike the rock or to cause the water to flow? I and thou. God and Moses. Moses did his part, and God, His. What Moses did was clear to the eyes of all the people; what God did was hidden in the bowels of the rock and remained a secret to many.

The Holy Spirit is present at every gathering of God's children. The Holy Spirit yearns to reveal to us the Saviour; to send the blessed rain upon the fields which have lain so long parched and dry.

Once we had the privilege of receiving into our home six brother-missionaries from Finland. They were on their way to Southwest Africa. Would they have had the courage to leave their homes and their friends if they had not, with the eye of faith, seen the invisible behind the rock? Had they not, like St. Paul, had the assurance that the Holy Spirit was ready to work with them in a wonderful community of labour? They hope that they may, also, like St. Paul, return one day to their own country and may proclaim how much God has done through them and how He has opened the door of faith to the heathen (Acts 14:27).

I and thou. God and man. In my study now I can see, in spirit, so many faithful brethren—in Europe, in America, everywhere. I think of the beloved missionary brethren, faithful brothers and sisters, in China and India. My heart goes out to you. I must speak to you a word of encouragement. In every task performed for the Master, there are always two at work. I and thou. The Holy Spirit and yourself. The Holy Spirit is always ready to co-operate. When you strike the rock, the Spirit will do His secret work in the hearts of your hearers. I will make the rough places smooth, brake open the gates of brass where you have long been knocking in vain, cause the iron bars to yield (Isa. 45:2).

Leave to God the work which is too much for your own strength. You will marvel what God

will bring about through you, and all the time you will have the glorious knowledge: *We are labourers together with God* (1 Cor. 3:9).

Say to them: "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord" (Ezek. 37:4). That was a strange task that God gave to His prophet. One might think there was little sense in speaking to dead bones. But the prophet did as was commanded him. There was a mighty rushing sound, and the bones came together; but there was still no life in them. Then the prophet prophesied to the winds, and they that had been dead became alive again.

The explanation is given us by the Spirit. The field of the dead, which the prophet saw in a vision, was the whole people of Israel. We believe that this vision is now about to be fulfilled. Zionism has awakened in the Jews a longing for their own land. Jews are going back to Palestine. Of course, the Zionist movement is, in the first instance, national and not religious. But nevertheless the time will soon come when Zechariah 12:10 will be fulfilled, and the people of Israel will recognize Jesus as their Messiah.

It is not only the people of Israel that resemble a field of the dead. St. Paul says: "You . . . who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1). Nevertheless, God gives us the double task of prophesying to the dead bones and to the wind.

If there are few conversions in any parish, is it not because we have forgotten to prophecy to the

wind: "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live" (Ezek. 34:9)?

I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Giver of life. It is the wind that breathes life into the dead bones.

The wind goes its own way. It bloweth whithersoever it listeth (John 3:8). You cannot command the wind. You desire a south wind. If the wind is blowing out of the north, it will be in vain for you to say: Blow from the south! But you can turn your windmill round, so that the wind blows against the sails and turns the wheels. By yourself, you can bring about no reawakening. But if you submit your will to the Will of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit can work through you.

The Spirit is invisible, like the wind. You hear the wind blowing. You see the effect of the Holy Spirit at a meeting. I remember a meeting where thousands of God's children were together. Many and earnest prayers had been said that the Holy Spirit might shower down blessings upon those present. In the last meeting there were such manifestations as I had never before witnessed. Men and women, children of God, confessed their sins, bowing down in penitence. It was not the words of the brother, but the Holy Spirit, that caused this tremendous effect.

The Holy Spirit is inscrutable in all His ways. You cannot tell whence He cometh and whither He goeth. How our hearts rejoiced when we heard,

some years ago, that God had vouchsafed a re-awakening in Scotland and Wales! What the Lord has done in Scotland and Wales He is ready to do everywhere. May God arouse a desire for a revival in the hearts of all His children.

The Holy Spirit is the only Giver of life. The pure wind from the sea drives away the bacilli of disease. A community without the Holy Spirit is dead. A preacher who does not work in the strength of the Holy Spirit is dead. My brethren, let us not deceive ourselves. Letters from many parts come to our house daily. I have the deep impression that in many, many churches there is only a show of life. There is organization but no life. We must all bow our heads, all acknowledge our guilt that there is so little spiritual life in our midst.

How can this become otherwise? We must once more prophesy to the wind. We must pray for new life through the Holy Spirit. Only the Spirit can create the new life. When God's wind blows it is a blessed time. Are you longing for that time? Then pray daily: "*Lord, send us a revival, and begin with me.*"

III

THE HOLY SPIRIT DWELLS WITHIN YOU

1 Corinthians 3:16

THE life of God's children is full of surprises. Amaziah had made an alliance with the king of Israel. He had hired a hundred thousand warriors for a hundred talents of silver. A man of God warned him: "O king, let not the Israelite army go with you! God is not with them." And Amaziah was ready to send the Israelite soldiers home; but it grieved him to have spent the hundred talents of silver in vain. The man of God answered him: "*The Lord is able to give thee much more than this*" (2 Chron. 25:9). "Much more." These two words might be written over the life of each one of God's children. God's treasury is never empty. Many years ago, after a conference in Joensuu, in Finland, I made a wonderful trip on a river. We went through thirty-one locks, but there was always more water beyond every lock. Our Lord always has more to give us.

The work of the Holy Spirit is not finished with the new birth. It is a great privilege when a man is converted. But conversion is not the end, but

the beginning of our Christian life. Do not be satisfied with the experience of your conversion. Standing still means going back. The apostle exhorted the brethren in Thessalonica that they should become *ever more perfect* (1 Thess. 4:1). The Lord has much more He can give you.

In His last, farewell talks to His disciples the Saviour spoke much of the Holy Spirit. "*It is expedient for you that I go away*: for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you" (John 16:7). Jesus said that the spiritual presence of the Holy Spirit in His disciples would be of more value than His bodily presence with them. The Comforter will not go away from them again. He will remain with them for ever (John 14:16).

At our conversion the Holy Spirit enters our hearts. "Do you not know that your bodies are a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit who is within you, and ye are not your own?" (1 Cor. 6:19). Do you think this refers only to the apostles or to a few great men? To whom is St. Paul speaking here? The Corinthians had been but a short time converted. They were babes in Christ; there was party spirit and division amongst them (1 Cor. 6:7). Many of them were carnal minded (1 Cor. 3:1). The tide of faith was low in the Church at Corinth. Grave moral offences had been committed (1 Cor. 6) and the apostle felt that the whole Church was to blame for this state of affairs. Nevertheless, he insists on the fact that every member of the Co-

rinthian Church is a temple of the Holy Ghost and that the Holy Spirit dwells in him (1 Cor. 3:16).

The youngest child in Christ is just as much a temple of the Holy Spirit as the father in Christ. You may be a backslider, you may have wandered far away, still the Holy Spirit has his home, a dwelling, within you. "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth *the Spirit of his Son into your hearts*" (Gal. 4:6).

You cannot possibly be a child of God if the Holy Spirit does not dwell in your heart. If through the grace of God, you have become one of God's children, if you have received the Saviour as your Redeemer who has borne your sins—the Redeemer from sin, as your king (John 1:12)—then the Holy Spirit dwells in you. He is there even when you are not aware of His presence. God's word cannot lie; it stands higher than your experiences and your feelings. Learn to grasp this fact in faith. Do not be afraid that you will become proud or puffed up. Nothing can humble us so deeply as the certainty that the Holy Spirit has taken up His abode in us.

When we have grasped the fact that the Holy Spirit dwells in us, our whole life in Christ can thereby become happier, more blessed, more fruitful for the Master. Pray God that these simple words may, through God's Spirit, become a blessing to you. Will you be quite silent for a few moments? Remember that the Saviour is, at this

moment, standing by you. I would enter the sanctuary with you. Will you kneel down and, looking humbly up in faith to your Saviour, say: "I know that I am a temple of the Holy Spirit, and *that God's Spirit dwells in me*"?

My body is a temple of the Holy Spirit. How many have in their youth ruined their bodies through fleshly lust! At first perhaps one sins through ignorance. Then the sin becomes a sinful habit, and one becomes the slave of one's own passions. One did not know what chains one was forging for oneself. How much are parents to blame if they neglect to warn their growing children of the dangers of the passions!

Your body a temple of the Holy Spirit. Tobias had built himself a chamber in the courts of the house of God. That was evil. Nehemiah immediately cast forth all the household stuff out of the chamber. Have you also a chamber of imagery, like the elders in Israel? Are there in your mind all manner of creeping things, and abominable beasts (Ezek. 8:10-12)? Are you under the curse of a sinful habit? Have you forgotten that you are a temple of the Holy Spirit? Jesus can break all chains. Go to an experienced brother or sister whom you can fully trust. A Roman Catholic priest would rightly regard it as a terrible sin if he so far forgot himself as to repeat what had been confided to him in confession. Without doubt he would be removed from his office. God be praised

that also in Protestant churches there are priestly souls who can treat what is holy with reverence, and who would never bring out of the holy sanctuary what has been laid there in the presence of God. Try to unburden yourself before such a brother or sister, and let the blood of Jesus Christ cleanse you from your sins. You will learn: "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8:36).

Do you not know that the Holy Spirit dwells in you? God be thanked, we know it. In the course of many years we have received many guests into our home. Most of them have left beloved memories behind them; unknowing, we have often sheltered angels under our roof. Once we received six lady missionaries unexpectedly from Finland. Did they cause us much trouble? On the contrary they rejoiced to be allowed to help. They felt themselves at home and were delighted to lend everywhere a helping hand.

Nor will the Holy Spirit be an idle guest. Like the Saviour, whose representative He is. He is now on earth, He has not come to be served but to serve. You can have but a faint idea of what glorious powers the Holy Spirit can unfold in you, if you will only allow Him. The Spirit is only waiting for you to ask for His help.

Have you ever considered how it must grieve the Holy Spirit to stand there idle? He knows how beautiful, how glorious, He could make the dwell-

ing, would you but allow Him to work His will. Shall I tell you what the Holy Spirit can do for you? God says: "And I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them" (Ezek. 37:27).

Do you desire an inward proof that you are God's child? The Holy Spirit gives it you (Rom. 8:16). Do you need guidance? The Spirit is ready to guide your whole life (Rom. 8:15). The Spirit will tell you when and where to speak and when to be silent. St. Paul was prevented by the Holy Spirit from preaching in Asia (Acts 16:6). When you speak, you will speak as one having power, with the strength of the Spirit (1 Cor. 2:1-5). Your work will not be in vain. Men and women will be converted; new life will come into your parish. The prayer meetings will be the best attended of all meetings, for your prayer will be in the strength of the Spirit (Eph. 6:18), and the Spirit will pray through you, with groanings which cannot be uttered (Rom. 8:26).

Have you a bad memory? The Spirit will remind you of everything that Jesus said and did (John 14:26). Do you desire a clearer understanding of God's word? The Holy Spirit is the best teacher. Without the light of the Spirit, your Bible-reading will be fruitless. The Holy Spirit will lead you to the understanding of all truths (John 16:22). Even the divine mysteries will

become revealed to you through the Spirit (1 Cor. 2:9-13). When I consider what the Holy Spirit is ready to bring about in me, I bow my head in shame that I have so often hindered His gracious work.

“And I will pray the father, and he shall *give you another comforter.*” The Holy Spirit is a person. A person is sent, a power is given. There are many precious names in the Holy Scriptures for the Holy Spirit. It is a blessed and a profitable task to look these names out with the help of a concordance. There are more than twenty-five names; one of the most beautiful is, perhaps: “Comforter.” The name of the Son of God was given before His birth. “And thou shalt call his name Jesus” (Matt. 1:21). At last Jesus has to leave His disciples in order to tread the path of sorrow and agony alone. It is the last hour in which they can be together. He is about to lay down His office of teacher and prophet. But before doing so He wishes to acquaint them with One who shall come after Him. He tells them who is to be His Successor. They must know the name of their new Leader beforehand. He is called “Paraclete.”

Names in the Scriptures differ from the names we have today. They have a deeper meaning. The name “Paraclete” indicates the character of Jesus’ successor. The same word in Greek in 1 John 1:2 indicates the office of the Saviour in heaven: “We have an advocate with the father.”

Luther translates the blessed word, "Comforter;" the Swedes, "Helper." But no translation can exactly reproduce the meaning of the word "Paraclete." The Latin word "Advocate" means someone whom we call to our side to assist us; the Greek word means a person who is always with us and always ready to intercede for us. Yet we do not need a Greek dictionary in order to understand the Holy Spirit in His work among men and in the heart of each one of us. Our own experience teaches us far better what the Spirit has been meant to be, for us. The more we learn to know Him, the more does our heart go out in grateful love to our Paraclete. Our experience and our heart tell us more than the best dictionary.

"And I will pray the father, and he shall give you another comforter" (John 14:16). Jesus had been their Paraclete up to that moment. What a privilege it was, to be able in one's trouble to turn to the Master! He was always there; He always had time for them, could always help them. It was quite natural that they should turn to Him in their need. "*They have no wine,*" said the mother of Jesus, and as soon as she had acquainted Him with her trouble she rested assured that He would set all right. "He will see to it," she thought. "*Teach us to pray,*" said His disciples, and the Lord gave them the most beautiful, the most wonderful of prayers, through which thousands and tens of thousands have opened their hearts to God.

“*Lord, help me!*” cries St. Peter in his hour of need, and immediately the Lord stretches out a saving hand to His disciple. “Thou shalt cry and he shall say, Here I am” (Isa. 55:9).

Since the Lord has begun His ministry in Heaven for us, He sent us another Divine Helper just as powerful as Himself, just as loving, just as willing to help us. The Holy Spirit is in us, and with us and always at our side.

Do we wonder that the Saviour said: “It is expedient for you that I go away”? A father says to his children: “All my life I have thought of you and cared for you. Henceforth I shall be able to do even more for you. I have received the good news from a distant land that I have inherited an immense fortune. It is expedient for you that I go there. I must take possession of it for you, and when I have received the inheritance, I shall be able to send you treasures which you do not dream of now.” The Lord Jesus is not only the heir, but He can leave the inheritance to whom He will. By His death we are the rightful recipients of this inheritance.

What is the inheritance? In the epistles of St. Paul we find two glorious passages: “*The riches of his grace*” (Eph. 1:7), and “*The riches of his glory*” (Eph. 3:16). The Saviour bought for us on Calvary the riches of His grace, but He sends us the riches of His glory from His throne in Heaven.

The Paraclete is a representative of the Saviour; that does not mean that we now have an invisible helper instead of a visible one. For if that were the case we should be the losers. The Paraclete does not reveal Christ to us merely as He was walking amongst His disciples, in the form of a servant, but also as the Son reigning in glory. He not only grants you a share in the riches of His *grace* but also in the riches of His *glory*. One day a young pastor asked an old sick shepherd whether he was on the way to Heaven, and the old man answered: "Young man, I have been living there for twenty years." He already had, here on earth, a share of His glory; his life was in Heaven, hidden in God.

"And I will pray the father, and he shall give you another comforter, that he may abide with you for ever" (John 14:16). In the home of many a dear reader there is a vacant seat. "You do not know how lonely I am since the Lord has taken my dear husband from me. He always thought of me and cared for me. Why could we not go home together?" Dear, beloved sister, your way need not be lonely any more. I should like to make you acquainted with the Paraclete, the Holy Spirit. Jesus sent Him to you, that He might become far dearer to you than your husband could ever be.

I have friends who never felt lonely any more after they had grasped the glorious truth that Jesus

was with them. You are not alone in your home any more. Jesus says: "*The spirit dwelleth with you*" (John 14:17). We human beings are poor comforters, but the heavenly Comforter points to Jesus, and where He is, there are your loved ones. "*Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am.*"

Are you lying on a sick-bed? Does sleep flee from your eyes? Will the long nights never end? Do you long for the morning? There is One sitting at your bedside who longs to keep you company. You are so tired that you do not wish to talk. Be still, and He will speak to you. He will talk to you about your Saviour and make Him great and wonderful to you. He will remind you of many a glorious promise. Time will go by quickly, and you will not toss restlessly from one side to the other. A deep inner peace will come upon you, and you will experience the truth of His word: "He giveth his beloved sleep" (Ps. 127:2).

Brother, you have grown old in your work; you are longing for a faithful helper. I know one. When you visit the members of your church, He will tell you to whom to talk as He did long ago to Philip (Acts 8:29). As you preach from the pulpit He will speak to the hearts of your hearers and open them to receive the good news. When you pronounce upon your church the apostolic benediction and desire for them the communion of the Holy Spirit, then remember that it is the mission

of the Holy Spirit to glorify Jesus and that He longs for co-operation. Know that this co-operation is for you, and pray: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with you all. Amen."

IV

HAVE YOU RECEIVED THE HOLY SPIRIT?

Acts 19:2

SHE was a widow. After a short, happy life together, her husband died. Her pension as a teacher's widow was very small, nevertheless she wished her son to have a good education. The faithful mother worked from early morning until late at night; no sacrifice was too great for her, and the son rewarded her by his industry. He completed his studies and became a famous physician.

Now the mother seldom saw her son. His profession took up all his time. After some time he married a girl of rich family, after which event the mother did not see him at all.

Shall I tell you why? I am almost ashamed to say it. The great physician had a narrow soul. He shrank from confessing to his wife his humble origin. He feared his wife would be ashamed of his mother.

Yet he had not forgotten his mother, nor her loving care for him. He often longed for one look from those faithful eyes of his mother. Finally,

the longing became so great that he decided to speak to his wife.

"You know, my dear, how different servants in the country are from those in the city. At home we had a faithful maid. When I was ill, she watched over me through many long nights. Had she not cared so faithfully for me, you would never have known me. Up there in the garret we have a little room which is not used. If you agree, we will send for dear Mary to live with us." With joy the young wife gave her consent to the kind plan of her husband. He sat down and wrote a long letter to his mother. He told her of his wife and how she would not understand that his mother was so plain and simple and begged her to come to him, but not to tell anyone that she was his mother.

Do you think the mother sent the letter back, enraged? He certainly would have deserved it, and a father would have done so, but what will a mother's heart not do in order to be near her child? She came, a plain little woman. She was introduced to the doctor's wife: "This is the faithful Mary." From that moment on she lived in the room in the attic. Humbly she settled down in her new home. When the young wife went calling on her friends, the doctor sneaked up to his mother's room. Then he would talk to his mother of his childhood, and these hours were the greatest joy of his mother's life. Nobody else noticed her presence in the house. The dear old mother remained

hidden in her room. Only once, on her arrival, had she been into the beautiful rooms of her son's home; she lived in his home, but only in the attic.

“Do you not know that you are God's sanctuary, and that the spirit of God has his home within you?” (1 Cor. 3:16, Weymouth). Is there not an earnest reprimand hidden in this question? Does it not show that in the Church at Corinth there was something wrong? If the Holy Spirit had been able to exert His influence, this question would have been superfluous.

Things were indeed going wrong in the Corinthian Church. A spirit of contention and disunion was rife. The people were converted to Paul and Apollos and not to the Lord. Grave sin and immorality were prevalent without arousing the indignation of the Church. Most of the Christians there had remained babes in Christ; there was no growth in grace. Few of them led a life of victory; the majority were carnal, not spiritually minded. What was the cause? The Holy Spirit could not exercise His power, He lived in the attic.

What is the reason for the lack of spiritual life in the Church of God? As one grows older, one easily imagines that things were so much better in years gone by, yet I do not think I am mistaken when I say that there was more spiritual life in our churches twenty years ago than there is now. I remember large meetings where the Holy Spirit worked with deep convicting power. God's chil-

dren wanted to be cleansed from hidden sin at whatever cost, and with what heavenly joy did they accept the full redemption in Jesus Christ! What blessed meetings we had in the years 1905 and 1906! At that time hundreds of people were converted. And now? What is the cause, that there is so little victory in the life of God's children? Why are there so few saved nowadays? Is it not because the Holy Spirit is still hidden away in the attic room?

There is a saying that a woman has a bigger heart than a man. True love cannot be deceived. The young wife soon noticed that something was depressing her husband. She discovered his secret, and the discovery pained her deeply. "How could you believe that I was so narrow-minded?" she asked her now deeply humbled husband. And so, hand in hand, the couple went up to the attic room. She took the old woman's hand, she pressed her fresh young cheek against the old one, and said softly, "Mother!" The two young people knelt before the old mother and asked her forgiveness. Then she was led triumphantly down-stairs, and the prettiest and sunniest room was given her, and from that moment happiness returned into the home.

"*Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?*" (Acts 19:2). Apollos preached at Ephesus, and these twelve men were the fruit of his work. St. Paul soon noticed that they lacked

something, and he asked them: "Have you received the Holy Spirit?" The Christian life is centred around these words "receive" and "accept." "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become sons of God." This is only the beginning of the Christian life. It begins with receiving and not giving, and thus it continues until the end. The Father gives, and the child accepts.

The apostle does not ask whether they were converted. He assumes that. But have you welcomed the Holy Spirit? Have you asked Him to come down from the attic and take possession of the whole house? The answer was in the negative. They did not even know that the Holy Spirit lived in their attic. They were ignorant like many children today. Two vital truths are not preached today as they ought to be; the return of the Lord and the person and work of the Holy Spirit. This means a great loss to the Church of God.

Apollos could not lead the people farther than he was himself. He had not received the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Two members of the Church, Aquilla and Priscilla, full of the Spirit of the Lord, noticed this lack in the fervent young preacher. They spoke of it to God only: "They took him unto them and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly." The young man was teachable, and accepted the truth. His ministry became more fruitful than before, and he could help many be-

lievers to grow in the Lord (Acts 18:27). Just as Aquilla and Priscilla had served Apollos, so could Paul help the disciples at Ephesus. He led them deeper into God's truth. The disciples were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and when Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Spirit entered into them; the result was a purification of God's children and a revival at Ephesus.

Have you received the Holy Spirit? The gift of the Holy Spirit is not the same as regeneration. The apostles were certainly born again before Pentecost. The Lord Jesus said they were all clean, with the exception of Judas (John 15:3). But they had not yet been baptized with the Holy Ghost (Acts 1:5). While Philip was preaching the Gospel in Samaria many were awakened, and surely many were born again, but they did not receive the Holy Spirit until Peter and John laid their hands on them (Acts 8:12-16). Paul experienced the new birth on his way to Damascus. But it was not until Ananias laid his hands on him that he was filled with the Holy Ghost (Acts 9:17).

It sometimes happens that the new birth and this being filled with the Holy Ghost are experienced at the same time. This was the case at the house of Cornelius. Peter had not even finished his sermon, but that did not matter (Acts 11:15); the main thing was that the Holy Spirit came upon those present. We must not forget that *not every child of God is equally mature for this gift*. There-

fore the fulness of the Holy Spirit is as a rule experienced after the new birth. The old mother dwelled at first in the attic, later on in the whole house.

The best interpreter of the Scriptures is the Bible itself. History and experience teaches us that the fulness of the Holy Ghost can be received without the laying on of hands. In reading (1 Cor. 12), one learns that one can be baptized with the Holy Ghost without speaking with tongues. There are diversities of operation, "but all these worketh that *one*—and the self same spirit, *dividing to every man severally as he will*" (1 Cor. 12:11). *The gift of the Spirit shows itself in our service and in our whole being.*

Moses did not have to tell the Israelites that his face shone. He who has received the fulness of the Holy Spirit does not talk about it and does not boast of it. The deeper our inner experiences, the more chaste we shall be in speaking about them. Here again the Holy Spirit will teach you when to speak a word of testimony and where to keep silence.

We are being filled with the Holy Spirit for a very practical purpose. It was not given us that we might revel in wonderful feelings, but in order to fit us better for the service of the King. Why was it that Finney's preaching was followed everywhere by wonderful conversions? He had experienced the hour when the Holy Spirit came down from the

attic, and many other holy men who were deeply blessed of God have enjoyed a similar experience, and their service was afterwards even more blessed than before.

The gift of the Holy Spirit is for every child of God. That blessed man of God, Andrew Murray, said in 1895 in his book, *The Full Blessing of Pentecost*: "It is the will of God that every one of His children should be filled with the Spirit. Without being filled with the Spirit, it is utterly impossible for an individual Christian or a church ever to live as God desires." God grant that these words of this father in Christ may stir up the heart of every believer and, above all, every Christian worker.

Do not think that this wonderful blessing is only for a few prominent ministers. *The fulness of the Holy Spirit is the birthright of every child of God.* "The promise is unto you and to your children and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39). This blessing was not only for the apostles but for every member of the Church who has been born again. "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" asked Paul of the twelve men in Ephesus. Paul knew too well what this gift meant to the individual Christian, and what power it would give to their testimony. He considered this blessing as a necessity to the normal growth of the individual Christian as well as to the Church. The Church at

the present time has no normal development. She does not long for more power from God. There are many who do not hunger after righteousness. For them is the word in Revelation 3:17: "Because thou sayest I am rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

Every child of God needs this Pentecostal blessing. It is not only for our service, as pastors and preachers; it is for everybody. The mother needs the fulness of the Holy Spirit for the training of her children, especially in treating grown-up children. A certain mother had received the Holy Spirit by simple faith at a certain conference. After some time a sister asked her whether she had now more power in her testimony, and whether she had now more work to do for the Lord, whereupon this mother simply replied: "I have not noticed anything of the kind, but I have won the hearts of my children." Mother! Is not that wonderful?

The business man needs this blessing for his work in the office. Conditions are nowadays such that it is hard for a Christian to walk through this world with a clean conscience. The working man needs this blessing in his shop. We read in 2 Corinthians 2:15: "We are unto God a sweet savour of Christ." Can you also say with St. Paul: "I am a sweet savour of Christ"? The odour of violets reminds us of violets; the fragrance of roses,

of roses. If you wish to be a sweet savour of Christ, then there must be something in you which recalls Christ. If you go through the hyacinth fields in Holland in spring time, the odour of the hyacinths remains in your clothing. The closer you walk with the Lord, the more will you become a sweet savour of Christ, and this is only possible when the Holy Spirit has come down from the attic and when the whole house is at His disposal.

Being filled with the Holy Spirit is a definite experience in the life of a child of God. You can be saved and yet lack the fulness of the Holy Spirit. The new birth gives life, but the Holy Spirit coming down from the attic endues with power. A child of God can know whether the Holy Spirit has left the attic and come into full possession of the whole house. This is clear from Acts 1:4, where the Lord commanded His disciples that they should not depart from Jerusalem until they had received the promise of the Father. To St. Paul's question, Acts 19:2, the disciples had to answer with a definite yes or no. The twelve men answered: "No." What is your answer?

Have you received the Holy Spirit? Brother, won't you go on your knees and bring this question before the throne of grace? In the year 1913 I spoke at a conference in Wales. At a ministerial meeting, where about one hundred pastors were present, Dr. Gray, the head of the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, gave a personal testimony.

He said that God had shown him that he did not possess this gift, but he was yearning for it, therefore he went to Dr. Gordon, who was able to show him how to receive this gift. We then united in earnest prayer. I shall never forget that prayer meeting. The Spirit of God worked with mighty power. There was conviction, humbling and lives transformed. Whatever we ask according to God's will, will He surely give us. It surely was God's will that we should pray for the fulness of the Holy Spirit, and the Lord heard the earnest prayer of His servants.

Dr. Torrey tells how he spoke once at a great Christian Endeavour meeting on "How to win souls," and at the end of his address he emphasized the necessity of the fulness of the Holy Spirit for our personal work with souls. After the meeting a pastor came to him and said: "I have not received this blessing yet, but I am seeking it. Will you pray for me?" Dr. Torrey said: "Shall we do it now?" When the audience had left the hall, both knelt down on the platform and asked God to fill the pastor with His Holy Spirit. Then they separated. After a few weeks Dr. Torrey heard through another minister that this pastor had come home a transformed man and that there were conversions now each time he preached. Soon he received a call to a new and difficult field of labour. In this new church the people did not believe in evangelization nor in con-

versions. The pastor knew that this was a call of God, so he went, and in six months about sixty-nine people were converted, among them thirty-eight business men.

The promise of the Father is for you. Undoubtedly this gift will enable you to have victory in your daily life and will give you power for service. The Holy Spirit will work with you, and precious souls will be saved. Sin-burdened souls will be washed in the blood of the Lamb; they will be helped by you, strengthened, and made ready for the coming of the bridegroom. Brother, sister, if the Lord has entrusted souls to your care, whether as a pastor, teacher or mission preacher, if this gift was bestowed, if it is meant for you, and if you have not as yet received it, would you not think it a sin not to reach out for it? "Have you received the Holy Ghost?"

V

THAT CHRIST BE FORMED IN YOU

Galatians 4:19

WHEN we study the character of the Apostle Paul as it is revealed to us in the Acts of the Apostles, and more especially in his epistles, we notice a remarkable trait. Paul was not only a missionary and evangelist, not only a travelling preacher of the Gospel of Christ crucified; besides all this, he was also a pastor. With tender care he watched over the souls entrusted to his keeping, and unceasingly prayed for them.

It would be a blessed work to gather together into a book all the prayers of the Apostle Paul. I will mention only two: The prayer for the Ephesians (Eph. 3:16-19), "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, . . . that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God." And the prayer for the Galatians: "*That Christ may be formed in you.*"

Do you know how the little chick grows in the egg? First you see nothing but a little speck. From this the little chick is gradually developed, and fills the whole egg, and then pushes its way

through the shell. Thus Christ must be formed in you. The self-life must be suppressed, and in proportion as this decreases the Christ-life can grow and Christ will be formed in you.

This is a special work of the Holy Spirit in the children of God. He longs to glorify Christ in us. In spite of our good intentions and exercises we are never able to do it. But the Holy Spirit can only fulfil His purpose in us if we allow Him to exercise His full power in us, and if we ask Him to come down from the attic and take possession of the whole house.

What will be the result of the working of the Holy Spirit? I will tell you some of the results, and I will pray that your heart may be filled with such a yearning that you will long with all your heart for this exceeding precious promise of the Father.

Joy, joy unspeakable, is the first evidence of the fulness of the Holy Spirit: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory" (1 Peter 1:8). When God's Spirit is at work glorious things will happen. Philip went to a city in Samaria and preached Christ to the people, and the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake. They received the Gospel gladly, and there was great joy in that city (Acts 8:8). And what was the reason for this joy? In those days names were written in

Heaven, and the Saviour Himself tells us that that is a reason for rejoicing (Luke 10:20).

Some years ago I was in Scotland and visited places where God had graciously granted a revival, and what struck me most was the beaming faces of the people, happy in their new-found salvation. No wonder, when the father, formerly a drunkard, was now transformed into a happy Christian, or when a mother could embrace a prodigal child. The Gospel means "good news," and wherever it reaches the heart, it brings joy.

There is threefold joy for the child of God. When a ray of God's grace shines into our darkened heart, and when we know that God for Christ's sake has forgiven our sins, we experience the first joy.

*"O happy day, that fixed my choice
On Thee, my Saviour and my God;
Well may this glowing heart rejoice,
And tell its raptures all abroad."*

Have you already experienced this joy? In this chapter we are speaking of the baptism of the Spirit and its blessed consequence. I cannot baptize a dead person. The fulness of the Holy Spirit presupposes life. First comes the new birth. Have you the life of God? Do you know the joy of salvation, or is your heart still sad? If you have not yet received the assurance that your sins are forgiven, then do not read further. Kneel down, and

seek Jesus, the Saviour of sinners. He hath said: "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37).

"I cannot tell how happy I am. It seems as though I had a musical box in my heart," a Dutchman said to me while attending a conference. You would scarcely believe that there is a greater joy still for us. But we do experience a still deeper joy when God uses us to lead a soul to Christ. If you have known this joy you will agree with me. But John knew a still greater joy. "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth" (3 John 4). God grant that all my readers may experience this threefold joy.

The world nowadays is so void of joy. No worldly pleasure can truly satisfy the heart. I have never seen so many unhappy faces as in the present time. Joy is always attractive. How refreshing it is to meet a person with a face that beams with joy! But unfortunately there are many Christians who do not have a joyous expression. This is a pity, for thereby outsiders get an unfavourable impression of genuine Christianity. The world around us should notice that we are the happiest people in the whole world. Of course, Christians must go through sufferings, too, like all the rest, but they possess a source of strength which the world knows nothing of. Jesus helps them to carry their burdens. The lark sings not only before and after the storm but also in the

midst of it. Christians can also sing in the night of suffering. If you desire an ever-rejoicing heart, be filled with the Spirit of God.

Liberty! *Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty* (2 Cor. 3:17). There are many children of God who are still bound. In a Sunday School class a teacher asked a boy whether he could break a piece of thread. The boy smiled; of course he could do that. The teacher placed the boy in the midst of the class and had him bound with thread until he could not move. The thread was stronger than the boy.

“But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death” (James 1:14-15). The beginning of sin lies in our thoughts. We have sinful imaginations, then a moment comes when we do not resist any more. The sinful thought becomes a sinful act and, often repeated, becomes a sinful habit. The soul is bound and fettered.

We may have life, but lack the liberty. The eagle in the zoological gardens has life but no liberty. He wrestles in vain to be free. He beats the iron bars with his wings in vain. He can never free himself. Someone else must give him his liberty. Are you bound? Do you sigh under the weight of your fetters? Has your bondage become a sin to you? God can never use a Christian who

is bound by sin. Where the Spirit of God is, there is liberty. Be filled with the Spirit of God, and the fetters will fall. Do you still want to live in sin, or would you like to be free? Do you really long for freedom? Then come to Jesus. He can help.

*“Would you be free from your passion and pride?
There is power in the blood, power in the blood!”*

Love! *“The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us”* (Rom. 5:5). A lawyer may be very able in his profession without necessarily loving his clients. A physician can have great success without loving his patients. A business man can prosper without loving his customers. But you can never be a worker of Christ without a deep passion for lost souls. Love alone is the key to the hearts of men. Even the hardest heart cannot, in the long run, resist the influence of love.

There was once a blacksmith living in the country who used to swear terribly, and rejected God in His love. From time to time a Christian neighbour exhorted him, but he only answered with mockery. Finally the good neighbour thought his endeavours were in vain, so he kept silent. But one night he could not sleep for thinking of his poor lost neighbour. The next morning he went to the smith, and when the smith asked him what he wanted his eyes filled with tears. What words

could not do, tears did. The smith realized that he was a lost soul and cried for mercy.

Even those who have sunk the deepest are receptive of love. Love begets love. What drove the prodigal son back to his father's house? Did the husks which he would fain have eaten make him long for the bounty of his father's table, or was it the memory of his father's love at home?

Why did our Lord leave His home in glory to come to this sinful earth? Was it not His great compassion and love which led Him to Gethsemane and to Calvary? "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends" (John 15:13).

Paul, what drives you from land to land, from city to city? After they have stoned you at Lys-tra, why do you preach the same Gospel in Derbe? Why are you exposing yourself to so many dangers? The answer is simple and plain. "The love of Christ constraineth us" (2 Cor. 5:14).

Beloved! *What the Church of Christ needs is a new baptism of love.* Is this not your heart's cry? "More love to Thee, O Christ!"

*"More love to Thee, O Christ,
More love to Thee!
This all my prayer shall be,
More love to Thee!"*

"The love of many has waxed cold." The Lord reproached the Church at Ephesus: "Nevertheless,

I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love " (Rev. 2:3). Would not this reprimand come home to many of our hearts, too?

It was said of the first Christians that they loved one another. But how little brotherly love exists now in the Church! An ancient artist was commissioned to paint a portrait of Alexander the Great, and he became greatly embarrassed thereby. Alexander was disfigured by a scar on his forehead which was the result of the powerful blow of an enemy. If the artist were to paint the scar he would hurt the pride of the great general. If he did not show the scar the portrait would not be true, and this his artistic pride could not bear. He found a way out, and painted the great king with his forehead resting on his hand. Thus the scar was covered by the hand. Shall we not, also, with the hand of love cover the scars of our fellow-Christians. The Master has given us an example: "If I, then, your lord and master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet" (John 13:14).

We need a new baptism of love. More love to our Saviour, more love amongst the believers, and more love to the lost souls. Do you wish to have more love? Let the Holy Spirit fill you, and you will experience "that the love of God is shed abroad in your heart by the Holy Ghost."

Power in prayer will be given through the Holy Ghost. "Likewise the spirit helpeth our infirmi-

ties: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered" (Rom. 8:26).

Spurgeon says: "Cold prayers are like arrows without points, swords without blades, birds without wings. They do not pierce through, they do not cut, they do not reach Heaven."

What is the reason that, as a rule, the prayer meetings are the least attended? Is it not because there are so many cold, lifeless prayers? Would there not be more spiritual life in our meetings if there were more real prayers?

"Ye have not because ye ask not" (James 4:2). How much time do you spend daily in your prayer chamber? Are you really satisfied with your prayer life? Are you praying sufficiently for your husband, your children, for yourself? Are you praying for your pastor? Are you praying for a revival in your church? Can it be said of you, too: "You have not, because you ask not"?

Praying is never in vain. I can make three promises to you. When you pray you will always get something, and you will never go back empty-handed. Secondly, you will always get something good, the Father never gives stones for bread. And, thirdly, you will always get something that you need at the moment.

The disciples always watched the Master in His communion with the Father and came to Him with

the request, "Lord, teach us to pray" (Luke 1:11). In answer, the Lord gave them the wonderful prayer called "The Lord's Prayer." It should rightly be called "the disciples' prayer." There are certain Christian circles where this prayer is little used. We use it gratefully every day in our family worship.

Prayer is the breathing of the soul. In one respect it is very simple. The child tells the Father what he would like to have; and the more simple and more childlike the prayer is, the better. When a child comes to his father he does not learn his speech by heart; and a well brought up child will not coax his father to do something which he knows is not his will. There is many an example in God's word where the need is presented very simply.

But there is also another side to the prayer life. In Jude 20 we read, in the literal translation: "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, *praying in the Holy Ghost.*" In Ephesians 6:18 the apostle says: "Praying always *with all prayer and supplication in the spirit.*"

The older we get, the more do we realize our human weakness. In our prayer chamber we often sigh: "We know not what we should pray for as we ought." Real prayer is prayer in the Spirit. The Holy Spirit teaches us to pray according to the will of God; He leads us in our prayer and shows us our needs; He reveals to us our weakness.

He creates in our hearts a longing after more power. He glorifies Christ. He shows us our Saviour in all His glory, and when we realize how little we are like Him, we fall on our knees. If you do not know what to pray and how to spend your time in the prayer chamber, ask for the fulness of the Spirit, and the Spirit will pray through you. You will have answers to prayers at which you will marvel, and you will experience that He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us (Eph. 3:20).

We need priestly souls today. The most important Christian work is not accomplished in the study, nor in the pulpit, but in the praying chamber. Would you like to have power in prayer? Would you like to experience that the Spirit Himself makes intercession for you with groanings that cannot be uttered?

Victory in our daily life! The Holy Spirit gives this. "*But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ* (1 Cor. 15:57).

It is foolish to undervalue your enemies. It results in conceit and defeat. We have three mighty enemies that wish to overcome us at any cost, "the world, the flesh and the devil." Once Sinbad the sailor went past a rock which had such strong magnetism that all the nails were drawn out of the boards, and the ship fell apart. The world seems

to exercise the same power upon us. The Israelites did as the people amongst whom they sojourned, and there are many Christian believers who do the same.

The devil has a much stronger power than you realize. He knows our weak points. He knows exactly what we have not surrendered to God in our life. There he attacks us—and not in vain. If he is at first defeated, he may let you alone for a little while, but do not think that he has given up his subtle attacks. He will come again, and bring seven other spirits with him worse than himself.

The flesh, your nature, your own self, is your worst enemy. Do not think that your old nature is dead; the apostle says (Rom. 6:11): “Reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” St. Paul does not say that the old nature is dead. Even though we take our old nature to the cross, it still lives at the cross. Our tendency to sin is with us to the end. He who teaches otherwise deceives himself and others. I should be to blame if I did not tell my readers that the power of these three enemies is extremely great. A terrible battle for life or death is being fought. Either you conquer your enemy, or you are conquered. Either David kills Goliath, or the giant defeats David. I would not discourage you, but I must tell you the truth—you cannot deal with your enemies alone. You must seek help from without: “The Lord shall

fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace " (Ex. 14:14). Do you feel weak and miserable? The Lord will give you grace " to be strengthened with might *by his spirit* in the inner man " (Eph. 3:16). We have the distinct promise from the apostle, " Walk in the spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lust of the flesh " (Gal. 5:16).

When God opens our eyes to this glorious truth we cease to fight with our new nature against the old; for the battle is no longer between the old and new nature but between the Holy Spirit and the flesh. The Holy Spirit is stronger than the flesh.

Where is your place in this battle? *You must constantly surrender your will to the Holy Spirit.* The will is the centre, and the Holy Spirit must have it under His perfect control. Now we have come to an important conclusion. Sin is not overcome by fighting but by yielding.

Always victorious! Is this possible? Many a child of God has testified that the Lord is faithful and has granted them according to His promise. I have known people who had such a temper that they made life unbearable for their loved ones. They were sorry for this, and after every outburst of temper they were depressed and unhappy. They thought they would never get the victory over their temper. Others, again, could not get the victory over the sin of drink. They did not drink daily, but they were what we call chronic drunkards. For a time things went well, and they

thought they were free, but temptation came, and they sank deeper than ever. No wonder that they were disheartened and discouraged. I have met these same people transformed and free from their sin—but not through their own strength but through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Do you desire to live a life of victory? Surrender to the Holy Spirit this very hour. Ask Him to come down from the attic, and you will learn that the Spirit is stronger than the world, the flesh and the devil.

Are you afraid that your victorious life will not last? Then remember the words of the apostle, "Who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us" (2 Cor. 1:10).

Joy! Unspeakable joy, freedom from bondage, love towards the Lord and His children, but also love to a lost world, love to the unlovely, power in prayer, so that your prayers may be answered, victory in your daily life that Jesus can shine through you! Do you not desire to have all this? If these treasures are waiting for you so that your life may overflow with blessings on those around you, will you not stretch out your hands for them? The Saviour has said: "*If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall our heavenly father give the holy spirit to them that ask him?*" (Luke 11:13).

VI

TO ALL THAT ARE AFAR OFF

Acts 2:39

WHO has not seen the children crowding before the shop windows in the beautiful Christmas season, looking longingly at the wonderful things spread out before them? A little girl was leading her brother by the hand. "Can you see everything?" she asked anxiously. Then she went on to explain, in her quaint way, "Oh, that costs a lot of money, that is not for us. But you may look at this." I have tried to show you the glorious things which the full Pentecostal blessing will bring to you. Who does not desire victory in daily life, power in prayer, more love for Jesus, a deep inner peace which even the most trying circumstances cannot disturb? These are not treasures only longingly to be looked at from a distance but offered by our heavenly Father to each of His children. We should *possess our possessions* (Obad. 17).

For whom is this full Pentecostal blessing? Was it only for the apostles and the first Christians? Is not the power of the Spirit and the fulness of the Spirit to be received even now? Do only prominent men of God receive this gift to strengthen

them for a definite and important service, or is it the heritage of all believers even today? Can every child of God be filled with the Holy Spirit?

This question is of extreme importance. If I know beforehand that the fulness of the Holy Spirit was only meant for the first Christians, then it is useless for me to seek it. But if it is meant for me now, it is my duty to find out how I may receive it. God's word gives us the answer to this question. *Without a shadow of doubt the apostles received such a great blessing on the day of Pentecost that their whole life, their character and their work was entirely changed.* We know them before and after the Pentecost and can truly say of them: "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."

That they were truly converted is affirmed by the word of the Master Himself in St. John 15. In spite of the fact that the disciples had daily communion with the Lord Jesus, yet their spiritual life ripened very slowly. They did not conceive the meaning of the way to the cross. They were jealous and discouraged. One denied the Lord, and finally they all forsook Him. Then came the Pentecost, and with it the promise of the Father, and a new power was imparted to them. Now they, too, could follow Jesus on the way of suffering, and their whole desire was to glorify the Master.

Was this gift of the Spirit only for the apostles? Peter says in his sermon on the day of Pentecost:

“Ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, for the promise is unto you and to your children and to *all that are afar off*, even as many as the Lord our God shall call” (Acts 2:38-39). To which promise does Peter refer? Does he speak of salvation or the Holy Ghost? How is the word “promise” used in the Acts of the Apostles? In Acts 1:4 the Lord commands His disciples “that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but *ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.*” When we read this Scripture in its setting, then we see that Peter was speaking of the Holy Spirit in the preceding verse.

The fulness of the Holy Spirit was not only for the apostles but also for the Jews who listened, and not only for them but also for their children, for the coming generations of Hebrew Christians. Would to God that every Hebrew Christian were filled with the Spirit!

But we are not Jews. Is the promise, then, not for us? Has not Paul said that there is no difference between Jew and Gentile? Surely Paul is right. The promise is not only for the apostles but also for us.

Peter adds: “To all that are afar off.” This means us. We were *aliens* and *strangers* and *afar off* and are now “made nigh by the blood of Christ” (Eph. 2:13). But Peter goes still further:

“As many as the Lord shall call.” Have you heard His gracious voice? Has He called you by name? Are you His? Then you can surely claim this promise, and the power and the fulness of the Holy Spirit is for you.

You have heard of Finney. Wherever he went the Lord made use of him. He went into a factory, where many labourers were gathered together. Before he even started his sermon the people were on their knees pleading for mercy. Surely Finney was a man of the Spirit, filled with the Holy Ghost.

The fulness of the Holy Ghost is necessary for the preacher. He needs it especially. For then he preaches with much greater power. He does not preach in his own strength. He speaks with authority, and while he speaks the Holy Spirit opens the hearts of his hearers.

But not only the preacher needs the fulness of the Holy Spirit; every child of God needs it. It is needed not only for service and in the pulpit but also beyond the pulpit, in the study, in your daily walk and contact with your wife and children. Work and walk, service and character, cannot be separated. Only where there is a hidden life can a public life be fruitful for the Master.

The word “all” is a glorious word in the Bible. Not only Peter was filled with the Holy Ghost (Acts 4:8). After Peter and John were dismissed by the council they went to their own people, and after a wonderful prayer meeting the place was

shaken where they were gathered together, and they were *all full of the Holy Spirit* (Acts 4:31). What happened in Samaria (Acts 8:17)? In the house of Cornelius "the Holy Spirit Ghost *fell on all them* which heard the word" (Acts 10:44).

Every child of God can be filled with the Holy Spirit, every child of God can receive the power of God from above; you, too. Above all things *you* need the fulness of the Spirit. You never can be what God wants you to be without the fulness of the Holy Spirit. As long as the Holy Spirit remains in the attic, you will have no victory in your daily life and no power in prayer.

There is much suffering at present. Many a child of God must needs go through deep afflictions. You will never be able to bear your sufferings without the Holy Spirit. The devil seeks more than ever to ensnare the children of God, and you will never be able to resist the temptations without the Holy Spirit of God.

Every child of God must be filled with the Spirit; you, too. God grant that the conviction of this truth may deeply stir your heart and may lead you to repentance, that you may realize: "I am not what I ought to be. I have the Holy Spirit living with me, but He still lives in the attic. He could set the house in order. He could give strength in temptation and power for service, and He is waiting for me to ask Him to come down and take possession of my house and my whole life."

Are you longing for a revival? In 1905 we sent out many little cards with the prayer: "Lord, send a revival, and let it begin in me." Our God always works from the centre; He begins with His children. Is it not an awful thought to you that you are hindering the Holy Spirit? Have you ever felt that the Holy Spirit was being hindered in a meeting? I was in a great conference in Keswick, England. Dr. Pearson, who since then has gone to dwell with the Lord, was about to give the final message when suddenly a naval officer arose and confessed that he was guilty of hindering God's blessing. The ban was lifted, and I shall never forget the blessings of that hour for me and many others.

I am not what I ought to be and what God *desires to make* out of me. Is this not a very humbling confession? Does it not humble you deeply? To live without the fulness of the Holy Spirit is sin. "Be filled with the spirit" (Eph. 5:15) is a command of God, and to disobey it is sin.

I am sinning against my own spiritual life. I am to blame that I do not grow in my inner life. I grieve my God. The fulness of the Spirit is the promise of the Father (Luke 24:29). The Father knows that I need it. He waits for me to take it by faith (Luke 11:13). God is not to blame if you are not filled with the Holy Spirit.

You are sinning also against your church.

Brother, I do not like to hurt your feelings, but would it not be wrong if I did not express my inner convictions? You can preach in the energy of the flesh or in the power of the Holy Spirit. Which method do you think will God bless most? Your responsibility is great. Souls would be saved if the Holy Spirit could exercise full sway in your life. Shall they be lost because of your indifference? You have known the Lord for years, but your husband and your children have not. You have told them much about the Saviour, but they did not want to hear. There is much in your life at which they take offense, and rightly so. How different all would be if Christ could shine through you unhindered!

Does your conscience smite you? Do you see what a greater blessing you could have been to your church, your wife or your husband or your children?

But do you know that you have sinned against the Father, too? The Holy Spirit is a gift of the Father (Luke 11:13). Your life could have been so rich, but you have rejected this precious gift. I was deeply moved when a brother wrote to me that he had no need of a Pentecostal blessing nor the Spirit's fulness. He was perfectly satisfied with his conversion. The question is not whether the brother is satisfied, it is whether God is satisfied.

The brother wrote this out of fear, because of the Pentecostal movement. There were servants of

God, men and women filled with the Spirit, in every century, long before the Pentecostal movement. There are also to-day hundreds of God's children who possess the fulness of the Spirit and His power who do not belong to the movement.

You also sin against your Saviour if you have not the fulness of the Spirit. He Himself has asked the Father to send us the Holy Spirit (John 14:16). He will remind you of all that Jesus has said (John 14:26). Your life would be more fruitful for the Saviour. "Herein is my father glorified, that ye bear much fruit." The Saviour says: "It is expedient for you that I go away, for if I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you" (John 16:7). Do you not think you grieve the Saviour if you do not yield to the Holy Spirit?

"Grieve not the holy Spirit of God" (Eph. 4:30). Do you not think you grieve the Holy Spirit of God if you confine Him to the attic? Do you not owe Him much gratitude? Was it not He who first opened your eyes to your lost condition; He showed you your sins; He warned you again and again. He is the giver of life. He desires to make your life as beautiful as possible. He seeks not His own glory, but He is longing to glorify Christ in you. He does not force Himself upon you. He waits till you of your own free will surrender to Him in perfect obedience.

He desires to work through you. The world cannot receive Him. It does not know Him (John

14:17). He comes to the children of God (John 16:7). If He is to reach the world it must be through Christians devoted to His service. He needs your lips, your feet. Will you surrender them to Him? Gordon tells in a book of a girl, member of the Christian Endeavour, who suddenly died. At the funeral he met the leader of the Christian Endeavour. "Was Mary saved?" he asked. "I cannot say for certain. At the last meeting she was the last to leave the hall. An inner voice told me to ask her directly whether she was saved. Our conversation turned into other channels, and I never asked the question," the leader replied.

On entering the vestry he met the pastor: "Was Mary saved?" "This question is worrying me," was the answer. "She was one of my favourite scholars. She was active and bright. Last Sunday she came after the sermon and received some tracts for distribution. I was alone with her in my study. I felt urged to speak to her about her soul, then someone came to see me, and I had no chance to speak to her again."

After the funeral Gordon spent a few moments with the grieving mother. "Did Mary belong to Jesus?" he asked. "What would I not give if I knew that for a certainty! One day before her death an inner voice said to me: 'Speak to Mary.' But I was afraid to excite her. I did not dream that the end would come so suddenly. Oh, had I only asked her!" Gordon added: "I have no rea-

son to doubt Mary's salvation. I hope she is with the Saviour and that we shall meet her again." What impressed me was that the Holy Spirit had desired to use three of God's children. He had wished to use their lips, but none obeyed.

The fulness and the power of the Holy Spirit is for all God's children. They need it not only for service but also for their own spiritual growth. It is meant for all. If you have not received it, sin no longer against the Lord, against yourself or against those around you.

*"Holy Ghost, with pow'r divine,
Cleanse this guilty heart of mine;
Long hath sin without control
Held dominion o'er my soul.*

*"Holy Spirit, all divine,
Dwell within this heart of mine;
Cast down ev'ry idol throne,
Reign supreme—and reign alone."*

VII

HINDRANCES TO FULNESS AND FRUITFULNESS

Exodus 18:19

HERE and there in the deep valley lay scattered a few farms. The thatched roofs show between the trees. In front of the little church stood the old village pump, always carefully packed in straw during the winter, where the village lasses and swains drew water for kitchen and stable. But sometimes the pump froze in winter, and in summer, during a long drought, the water had been known to dry up. Only in the deep, blue lake up in the hills the water was always fresh and clear. So the villagers resolved to draw their supply of water from the lake. And now there was always water, summer and winter. You only had to turn a tap, and water flowed as much as you wanted.

After a time a clever man discovered that there is a power hidden in water which can drive machines. Soon many families began to settle in and around the village and the little colony grew into a flourishing market-town, with factories and hundreds of busy workers. Some years passed, and the

prosperity of the town increased. But, one morning, when the old washerwoman went to draw water, there came only a diminishing trickle instead of the usual flow. In a few days, there was no water at all. The villagers had to go back to the old pump again. But all the wheels of the great machines in the factories stood still; the old pump could not work them. The workmen sat idle at home, ill-tempered and careworn. There was neither work nor bread. Many resolved to seek new homes, for a town without water or source of power could offer them but a wretched existence.

All efforts to discover the cause of the sudden stoppage of the water were in vain. "Can it be that there is no more water up there in the lake?" "No, that is impossible. The lake is full, and the reflection of the sun still quivers in the clear, blue water." Nor was there anything the matter with the conduits. All were at a loss. The suffering became greater and greater. At last the riddle was solved. An old tattered coat had been stuffed into the pipe which led the water out of the lake. A young tramp had wanted to avenge himself because he had been refused assistance in the town. Without delay, the rags were pulled out of the pipe, and now the water flowed as before, to the great joy of all the citizens.

I have been deeply moved by many letters which I have received from anxious souls. In many hearts there is a great longing. As the hart pant-

eth after the water-brooks, so does the soul yearn for the living God. A man may be dissatisfied with his circumstances; that is a wrong dissatisfaction. Or, a man may be dissatisfied with himself; that is a good dissatisfaction, born of the Spirit of God working within. Many are dissatisfied with themselves. They long for a feeling of greater victory in their daily lives, of greater strength in the life of prayer. They stretch out their hands for fulness and power of spirit. They hunger and thirst after righteousness. Shall they not be filled? "How is it," they ask, "that my yearning is not stilled, my prayer not answered?" This is a sincere question coming from honest hearts. It shows that God's Spirit has searched us. "I lack the fulness of the Spirit, and yet I desire to have it, whatever the cost. If, through this gift of the Spirit, my service may become more fruitful, more blessed, would it not be a sin if I did not strive to gain it? How is it that I have not yet received it?"

I have often been asked this question, and it deserves an answer. God grant that I may give the right answer.

God is not to blame. The Holy Ghost is as ready to help mankind today as in the beginning. The strength and the fulness are there. The lake up in the hills is still full. We must look for the fault in ourselves. Somewhere there is an obstacle which hinders, or even prevents the outflow. I should like to suggest a fourfold obstacle: Lack of obedi-

ence, of repentance, of consecration and of faith. For a moment I lay down my pen. Before reading further, let us ask God to grant us light, that we may look into ourselves and perceive where the obstacle lies in our own souls, and to touch our hearts, that we may truly desire the removal of it.

*“Refining Fire, go through my heart,
Illuminate my soul;
Scatter Thy life through every part,
And sanctify the whole.”*

There is a lack of repentance even in many of God's children. “Repent, and be baptized” (Acts 2:38). Repentance implies a change in our attitude to sin. We must regard our sin in a different light. God hates sin; do I hate it, too? Are there sins which I still connive at? Does the cross of Christ stand in the centre of my life? It is Golgotha that teaches us the sinfulness of sin.

Do you lead a regular, holy family life? Is your house a Bethany, where Jesus gladly enters? Is there sunshine in your home? The Lord has called us to be kings and priests. Many a father cannot be a priest because he has not first become a king. A king who is always suffering defeat will not long remain king. There is many a young girl who has been converted, but who regards her unconverted parents without honour or love. When you found forgiveness and peace in the Saviour, did not your life then become a new life? Does not your soul

sing within you? You have gained much. Have you ever considered that your parents, your husband, have lost much by your conversion? Formerly you used to go together to worldly amusements, and now such things mean nothing to you. Something has come into your life which those dear to you cannot understand. In the depths of your heart is a shrine which you cannot open to them. Have you ever thought what your new-found happiness means to others? Do you strive to make up for this through redoubled love? I am no longer young; my parents have long since departed this life; my children are grown up and, with but one exception, far from home. The parent's heart hungers for the children's love. Do not be content to scatter flowers on the grave; scatter them rather on the road where your parents walk in this life. Is there unity in your home? Is there any debt of love which you have not paid?

"Bring the causes unto God" (Ex. 18:19). It was wise counsel that Jethro gave to Moses. Moses dissipated his strength. There is always a danger, especially with great men, that they try to do everything themselves. Many a preacher suffers from this infirmity, many a business man no less. Moses was wearing himself out, and his wife and children certainly suffered under this as well. The people were becoming discouraged and weary. Have you made those around you weary? Follow Jethro's advice: "Bring the causes unto God," and

you will learn that: "Blessed be the Lord, who daily beareth our burdens" (Ps. 68:19).

Bring your affairs before God. It may be that you will then find it impossible to act as you had intended. You may feel yourself bound to take much more interest than hitherto in the well-being of your subordinates. Is Jesus quite in agreement with your method of doing business?

Perhaps you have habits which, in themselves harmless, yet prevent you from making spiritual progress. The apostle warns us to lay aside not only the sins which so easily beset us, but also every unnecessary weight or burden (Heb. 12:1). A burden is something that breeds inward discontent. For many young people the apparently harmless cigarette is a burden. Are you putting a drag on your progress with some such burden?

Is there anything in your past that you have not put in order? A friend of mine, Countess Pfeil, insisted always on the importance of a "clean conversion." The great thing for her was that the convert should make a good start and not bring anything with him into his new life which might hinder his spiritual growth. Zacchæus sought forgiveness from God, but also from men, and tried to make good his trespasses against others.

And now the serious question: Are you prepared to give up everything that you have recognized as sinful? The Spirit is a *Holy* Spirit. You cannot

choose Him and sin, at the same time. You cannot have both. He who will not renounce his sins cannot receive the fulness of the Spirit. It is not enough for us to give up some of our sins; we must be ready to renounce every sinful habit. Many people pray for the fulness of the Spirit, attend conferences, read books about the power of the Spirit, and still do not receive it, because they still cling to some secret sin.

God has given the Holy Ghost "to them that obey him" (Acts 5:32). The Saviour has shown us what a life of obedience is. He was obedient unto death (Phil. 2:8). "I was not rebellious," He said, "neither turned away back" (Isa. 50:5). To do the will of the Father was food and drink to Him. It was perfect obedience. "I delight to do thy will, O my God" (Ps. 40:8).

It was disobedience that drove our first parents out of Paradise and that bars the gate of Paradise against us. A disobedient child causes its father trouble and anxiety and is unhappy itself. God cries: "My people would not hearken to my voice" (Ps. 81:11).

"Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice" (1 Sam. 15:22). The path of obedience is always blessed. In many languages, the words "obey" and "hear" are connected. In Hebrew the two ideas are expressed by the same word. We must keep our ears attentive to the voice of our God and listen for the softest whisper of the Spirit. "If ye

be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land " (Isa. 1:19).

Obedience brings joy and blessing. It is as though the flood-gates were opened and the whole might of the water poured in. At Keswick many years ago a young student came to me and said he wanted to speak to me about the state of his soul. He told me that the doctrine of the Trinity caused him difficulties, and he begged me to explain it. I answered that this was impossible for me, but that I had the impression that there was something in his life which was upsetting his inward peace and harmony, and that he would never gain strength until he had removed this obstacle. We looked out through the window, away to Skiddaw. I said: "Up there in the hills is the deep lake. We need the water down here in the town. The pipes have been laid, but the water does not flow. The pipes are plugged."

Somewhat surprised, the young man left me without saying a word. Some hours later he returned and insisted on seeing me at once. His face shone. "The plug has been removed; the letter is already in the letter-box." Has, perhaps, one of my readers a letter to write or a journey to make? "Blessed is the man that heareth me, watching daily at my gates, waiting at the posts of my doors " (Prov. 8:34).

A lack of consecration may also be a reason why we do not receive the fulness of the Spirit. "Yield

yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God " (Rom. 6:13). A brother asked me once whether I thought that consecration was a definite stage in our spiritual development. Of course to be born again is necessary, for without being born again we cannot enter the kingdom of God. But is consecration, or self-surrender, equally necessary? Does it mark a step in our growth in the Spirit?

Our consecration to God's service ought to follow as a natural consequence of our new birth. Who does not know the story of the slave who was bought by a rich man on the way to the plantation and freed from his bonds? When his benefactor told him that he was giving him his freedom, the slave fell at his feet and begged to be allowed to follow his benefactor and serve him out of gratitude. St. Paul called himself, "A prisoner of Jesus Christ," and his life's motto was: "Whose I am, and whom I serve" (Acts 27:23).

The burnt sacrifice is called the first of all sacrifices. It represented not only Christ who offered Himself for His people, but also the people which must consecrate itself to the Lord in perfect sacrifice. All for all. The Israelites brought a tenth of their revenues to the Lord as a sign that the whole possession belonged to God. When they rested one day in seven, they acknowledged that God could dispose of their whole time.

Again and again is the necessity of consecration emphasized in God's word. God's children must belong wholly to God. He must be the first thing in their lives (Rom. 14:7, 8). Body, soul and spirit must be brought as a living sacrifice to God—our limbs, hands, lips, ears and feet must be consecrated to Him as instruments of righteousness (Rom. 6:13). Our very eating and drinking should be to the glory of God (1 Cor. 10:31). First we must give ourselves to God, and then everything we possess (2 Cor. 8:5).

This consecration to God is a conscious action in our life. Tersteegen dedicated himself to the Saviour with his own blood. It would certainly be very desirable that each child of Christ should immediately consecrate himself to the Lord at his conversion. Many omit this consecration altogether, to their own great loss, and with many it takes place later.

At conversion, we receive Jesus *as the Saviour* who hung upon the cross for our sins and thereby abolished all our guilt (John 1:12).

Happy are we when we accept Him as our *Redeemer* who frees us from the bonds of sin, who gives us the victory in temptation, who leads us in the glorious freedom of the children of God.

But we must not only accept Jesus as our Saviour and Redeemer. We must also recognize Him as our King. We do this by consecrating ourselves to His service. David says: "Thou art my king,

O God: Command deliverance for Jacob" (Ps. 44:5). Have you paid homage to Jesus as your king? If you desire victory, Jesus must be the king in your life. When the enemy threatens you, look up to your king and say: "Jesus, help me!" He helped Jacob, and He will not fail you. Out of Jacob He created a people: out of you he will make an overcomer. If you have not already done so, open wide the gates, that the King of glory may come in (Ps. 24:7).

But it is not your consecration that makes you Christ's. You were already His: He bought you with His blood. At your consecration you deliver up to Him what is already His.

A lack of surrender may be the cause why the inflow of the Spirit is obstructed. Satan knows exactly what there is in your life that you have not surrendered to God. He knows the weak spot in your armour, and to this he will direct his attack.

Ananias and Barnabas were both well-to-do people, both newly converted, both baptized, and both had broken bread with the apostles. Both wanted to give of their substance to God. Money is a good test. It brings us either forward or backwards. Lack of consecration is a sin. God is grieved thereby, and those around us will suffer. One sin leads to another, especially in our own homes. Ananias' wife is a partner in his fall. Money lost, service lost, life lost—and to have to appear before the Saviour with a lie on his lips! Where there is

not full consecration, there is no baptism of the Spirit, either. Satan cannot enter a heart which is sealed by the Holy Spirit.

A lack of consecration hinders God's Spirit. Our greatest enemy is our own self. One may buy a house today; but that does not mean that one can immediately take possession of it. Just so, one's own self is a tenant who is not easily turned out. Where self rules, there is no room for the Holy Spirit. But self is not so easily persuaded to leave its dwelling. There is only one way: The way of death. Many a worker for the kingdom of God desires spiritual strength so that his church and congregation may grow, and so that he may play the great man. But the gift of the Spirit is never given that our own self may become great and important. Our self must be sacrificed. Wherefore let us ask ourselves this question: "Do I seek the gift of the Spirit in order that my own person, however indirectly, may receive honour, or do I seek it for the glory of God?" It is the purpose of the Holy Spirit to glorify God.

A lack of faith may also be the reason why we have not received the gift of the Spirit. The Galatians had received the Spirit through "the hearing of faith" (Gal. 3:2). Lack of faith renders every blessing impossible. By their lack of faith the Israelites "limited the holy one of Israel" (Ps. 78:41). He could not exercise His powers. The Saviour could work no great miracle in His native

town because of their unbelief (Matt. 17:20). Many an earnest soul cannot win through to a blissful certainty of belief because of the notion that one must first have experienced some inner change before one can believe—forgetting that one must believe before one can feel the change, just as one must eat before the hungry feeling will disappear. Many of God's children who desire to grow in the knowledge of the Lord and in grace make the same mistake. They expect to experience special feelings or spiritual phenomena, before they can believe that they have received the gift of the Holy Spirit. And so it may be not only a lack of repentance, of obedience, or of perfect consecration, but also a lack of faith that prevents us from receiving the full Pentecostal blessing.

I close this chapter with two passages from the Bible. The Holy Spirit bless us all, that we may read them to our profit.

“And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hear us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him” (1 John 5:14-15).

Is it God's will that we should pray for fulness and strength of Spirit in our lives?

“If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly father give the holy spirit to them that ask him?” (Luke 11:13).

VIII

HOW TO OBTAIN THE FULNESS OF THE SPIRIT

John 8:38

MY monthly magazine, *The Coming King*, "*The Hope of Israel*," causes me much work, but also much happiness. I owe many fruitful suggestions to letters from our readers. I have been admitted into many a sacred confidence.

"The articles on the Holy Spirit have meant very much to me," a lady wrote to me. "When, as a young wife, I carried my only child beneath my heart, I was seized with a sudden fear at the responsibility for this immortal soul. I told my mother. She said: 'Pray daily to the Holy Spirit for guidance. Then you will always be advised from within what to do in every difficulty.' I did so. Every evening I knelt down beside the bed of my sleeping child, and later also beside the bed of my adopted child, begging God that He would take care of them and praying for the gift of the Holy Spirit. It is because I did this that these children have become a source of joy to myself and a bless-

ing to others." I should like to recommend all mothers to do the same.

The letter continues: "I sent one of the articles about the Holy Spirit to my daughter. When she received it she was just preparing a lecture and was faced with many problems and difficulties. She felt herself incompetent, unable to think at all. She read the articles, knelt down, and prayed for the Holy Spirit. Then she sat down at her writing-table; her thoughts were inspired by the Holy Spirit, and she wrote the whole lecture."

Both mother and daughter have had the glorious experience that one need not do one's work alone. They have learned how the Holy Spirit helps us in our work. Their lives have gained in richness and fruitfulness; they have learned to know and to value the glorious fellowship of the Holy Ghost in their daily work, the communion of the Holy Spirit.

"I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you" (John 14:18). The Master promised that He would Himself come to them through the Paraclete, for without His presence the disciples would have been left comfortless like orphans. Of course they would have had the priceless legacy of the Master's words, but *they needed Him*. Without Him Jesus' disciples are orphans.

There are many orphans among God's children. An orphan is like other children, but it lacks the ever-loving care of father and mother. Poor child, it has no home in the Father's heart. It cannot

say "Abba" from its heart, for it lacks the feeling of the child for its father.

Mother had put her little child to bed and was taking the candle away. "Mother, please leave the light, I am afraid of the dark." "Why are you afraid?" asked the mother. "God is with you in the dark as well as in the light. You do not need a candle when God is there." "Then take God away and leave me the candle." We may smile at a child's fear of the dark, but can you trust God always, in darkness, in sickness, in sorrow? When the Paraclete enters your hearts you need no candle.

Have you a home? Orphans have none. Has Jesus become your companion, so that you never feel at home without Him? Orphans look to Jesus for forgiveness of their sins and to the world for their joys. They live in discord with themselves, and so continually grieve the Holy Spirit.

The apostles were not orphans. Have you never remarked how the miracle of the Pentecost filled them with joy? They praised God in joy and singleness of heart. They preached the Gospel joyfully. With inner strength they bore testimony to the resurrection. They had to contend with many difficulties, but they left the council rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for Jesus' sake (Acts 5:41).

Would you not like to possess this joy-bringing Spirit also? Do you not desire to bear witness with

power to the saving and keeping grace of the Lord? Have you a husband or children who are still unconverted? Is not the idea that you have, perhaps been an obstacle to them unbearable? I read today in Finney's biography how a lady was converted at one of his revival meetings. Her husband was an atheist. Some years later Finney returned to that town. At a Bible-reading, God sent His light upon her. She was filled with the Holy Spirit. At the last meeting her husband was converted. She had not said a word to him. Simply through her altered nature, she had induced him to come to the meeting at which he found peace.

Do you long for this full Pentecostal blessing, for the baptism of the Holy Spirit, for strength and fulness of Spirit? I must use all four expressions, for they are employed in the Holy Scripture for the same experience in the life of a child of God. I ask one more: Do you desire the Holy Spirit to take complete possession of you and to make your life fruitful for Jesus, that the fruit of the Spirit may be made manifest in your life?

I should like to show you, quite simply, seven steps by which you may reach this goal.

The full Pentecostal blessing is the inheritance of all believers. "For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call" (Acts 2:39). The baptism of the Spirit is not for the unconverted. Many look to receive the gift of the

Spirit before having the assurance that their sins are forgiven. If you do not already possess this assurance, take your sins to Jesus. He died for you, also. If you go to Him, He will not cast you out (John 6:37).

When you receive Jesus you will become richer than the greatest millionaire. You will yourself be unable to estimate your wealth. Your inheritance is immeasurably great. You do not know the vastness of your estate. You will always be making new discoveries. You must first learn to know your priceless treasures and then make use of them.

Part of your inheritance is the full Pentecostal blessing. It is important that you should know this. Perhaps you have thought that a life of daily victory was impossible for you, and have therefore not troubled to strive after it.

You have surely met people possessed of a deep inward peace, from whom strength emanated, and you have thought perhaps that they were exceptionally blessed and gifted persons. Now, when you know that you, too, can receive the full Pentecostal blessing, will you not strive after it with all your might?

You imagine perhaps that the full Pentecostal blessing is a special gift for those who work for Jesus. And here you are certainly right. It is like this: The Saviour expects all His disciples to bear witness to Him and to work for Him. You were converted in order to serve Him. To do this ser-

vice you need the best equipment you can find, and that is the full Pentecostal blessing. A firm belief that the blessing may be yours is the first step to receiving it.

"I have not yet received this blessing." This is the second step. Of course, every child of God has in him the Holy Spirit. No one can accept Jesus as his Redeemer and Saviour without receiving His Spirit. But it is another question whether the Holy Spirit has possession of you, whether the Spirit, as I said in an earlier chapter, has come down out of the attic and rules throughout the whole house. Many deceive themselves by supposing that they have received the full Pentecostal blessing, because God blesses their work. When we are ill and we know what is the matter with us, that is the first step to getting well again. We go to the doctor and ask him to treat us. In the same way, the knowledge that I do not yet enjoy the fulness of the Spirit, that I still lack something in order to lead a life of perfect peace, freedom and joy, will lead me to the third step.

"I desire this blessing above all things." The Pentecostal blessing is the Father's promise to you. He knows that, without blessing, you can never become what He wishes to make of you. The Father stands waiting, ready to bless.

Ignorance can be the cause of our not receiving this blessing. But when you have read these Bible studies with prayer you will have gained the knowl-

edge that there is a Pentecostal blessing. The Saviour will not leave His children like orphans. It also will have become clear to you that this blessing is meant for you. You do not therefore lack knowledge.

“I desire this blessing,” you say, “above all things. I will begin to lead a new life, giving up those things which grieve God’s Spirit. Instead of following my own will, as hitherto, I will submit my will to that of the Spirit. When I am unwilling, I will pray: ‘Lord, make me willing to become willing.’”

You must give up everything else in order to gain possession of this precious pearl. You must do nothing in your own strength, but submit yourself to the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Only an empty vessel can be filled to overflowing.

“I cannot give myself this gift.” How important it is to realize this truth! Many a child of God has yearned after the full Pentecostal blessing. He grasped the conditions, obedience, and consecration, and then endeavoured to fulfil these conditions, and was bitterly disappointed when he did not succeed.

No one can baptize himself either with water or with the Holy Spirit. The Master Himself baptizes us with the Holy Spirit. The full Pentecostal blessing is a gift, a miraculous gift of the Father. One must be presented with a gift: it is useless to try, as many foolishly do, to seize it for oneself.

“ I must ask this gift from the Father.” To me one of the most important passages in the Bible is Luke 11:13: “ If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children: how much more shall your heavenly father give the holy spirit to them that ask him? ” The Saviour says that God will give this priceless gift to everyone who asks Him. His word is enough for me.

Perhaps you think that, since the Holy Spirit was given to the Church at the first Pentecost, there is no need for us to pray for this gift. I answer that God also gave His only begotten Son for the world (John 3:16). You must appropriate His most priceless of all gifts and make it your own. The Father will grant this gift in answer to the prayer of His child. “ And when they had prayed . . . they were all filled with the Holy Ghost ” (Acts 4:31).

In the firm belief that God accepts consecration and surrender, and hears my prayer, *I receive the gift, in childlike faith, at His hands.*” A sister who had brought many to the Lord said to me once at a conference: “ I came here because I felt so empty. I needed new strength, new courage, and I have been disappointed. I am inclined to leave before the end of the convention. You said I needed fulness and strength of Spirit. I have prayed to God for this gift, but I feel just as weak and sinful as before.” She was a blessed and experienced worker. I asked her: “ What do you say

to help a soul seeking peace and forgiveness? ” “ I should say: ‘ Jesus won peace and forgiveness for you on the cross; receive Him in faith.’ ” “ But if you receive the answer: ‘ I do not feel that Jesus has accepted me,’ what would you say? ” “ I should say: ‘ It has nothing to do with feeling. You must believe, and feeling will soon come.’ ”

I said to her: “ Sister, *as ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him* ” (Col. 2:6). “ Our whole life’s journey is a walk of faith. Receive the blessing in faith, and your experience will later confirm that the Pentecostal blessing is a reality for you.” She left me thinking of what I had said. She did not leave the convention before it was over. At the end she was able to give a testimony, praising and thanking God that He had heard her prayer and that the Lord had not allowed her faith to be in vain. Her life and service became more fruitful than ever.

Thousands of Christians have had the same glorious experience. The accompanying phenomena are various. Some experience at once a feeling of bliss filling their souls. Finney says he felt the power of the Holy Spirit come upon him like an electric current, so that his body could hardly bear it. Others have experienced nothing of this kind. In the same way, the gifts which accompany the Pentecostal blessing are not always the same. There are many gifts but one Spirit. All who receive this blessing in faith will receive new

strength for their work. Take the blessing in faith, and leave it to God in what particular manner the blessing will be manifested in your life. Do not wait for any particular feelings.

In the past, many of God's children have thought that the Pentecostal blessing was only expressed in the gift of tongues and assumed therefore that they had not received it. But that is not what the Bible teaches. We must not connect the gift of God's Spirit with any particular manifestation. Trust God's promise, receive in faith, leave the rest to Him.

God grant that many of my readers may have a deep longing for this precious gift! "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God!" In the East I have seen the people almost panting with thirst. "Majim, Majim!" they cried. God grant you such a thirst after the fulness of the Spirit. Your whole life would become different. You would become a blessing to all around you. On the last and most glorious day of the feast, the Saviour said: "If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of the belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this he spoke of the spirit, which they that believe on him should receive)" (John 8:38).

IX

THE TWO GREATEST GIFTS OF GOD

2 Corinthians 9:15

IN the last chapter we have seen what steps are necessary to have a Spirit-filled life. What a wonderful change would come if all Christian workers, ministers, Sunday-school teachers, missionaries who read this little book were to receive this priceless gift! My brother, if your service is not so fruitful as it might have been, the responsibility and the fault is not mine and not God's, but your own. Forgive me if I ask you once again in sincerity and love: "Have you received the Holy Spirit?"

St. Paul had arrived at Ephesus. In the early Christian Church there were three important centres: Jerusalem, the centre where the Gospel of the Cross was preached; Antioch, the centre of the missionary activity of the young Church; and Ephesus, the place where the necessity of the Holy Spirit for a full and victorious life was revealed.

No friends were waiting to greet Paul as he came on land. He had to look for his disciples. The beloved Pastor Madsen said, at the Wandsbek conference, that when he came to an unfamiliar

town or village in Denmark he would ask: "Are there any saints here?" Similarly St. Paul probably asked: "Are there any Christians here?" "If you are looking for the temple of the great Diana anybody will show the way. Christians? We never heard of any such people." Had St. Paul found the twelve standing at a street corner, preaching the glorious Gospel to the Ephesians, he would not have needed to ask this question.

St. Paul came with a definite question, to be answered with "Yes" or "No": "*Have you received the Holy Ghost?*" (Acts 14:2). I am afraid he had the impression that all was not as it should be with the twelve. They probably had a room somewhere in a little side-street where they held their meetings. But their numbers were not increasing. Maybe there had been as many as twenty of them the year before. One after another they began to stay away, and no new ones were added to them. They were no light, no salt, in Ephesus. The character of the work depends on the workman. How often, alas, one hears the remark: "If that is Christianity, I would rather not be a Christian." Did not Nietzsche say: "The chief obstacles to Christianity are the Christians"?

Paul did not ask: "Is your church well organized?" or, "Why do you not appoint a pastor for your church or a Church Army captain to visit amongst the people?" St. Paul came with quite a different question.

This same question I should like to ask you now, or, rather, not I but our great High Priest. Full of love, His eye is now upon you. He is longing for you to be changed into His own image, for you to become like Him, and it is your Saviour who now asks you: "Have you received the Holy Spirit?"

At the head of this chapter I have written the words: "The two greatest gifts of God." The Father has two special great gifts for His children. He gave His Son; He sent His Holy Spirit. These two gifts are so unthinkably precious that an ancient writer could write: "God has given us so much, in these two gifts, that there is nothing else that He could give." This sounds strange, but it is true. In the Son and the Spirit we can find everything necessary to a life in God.

God has given us two great gifts. He gave them to His children at different times. The Son was a Christmas gift; the Spirit was a Whitsun gift. These gifts are not the same. God gave His Son to redeem the world; He gave His Spirit to sanctify His chosen children.

What must one do with a gift? There are three important words which I should like to impress, not only on the memory, but also on the heart of the reader: *Give, take, use.*

God gave His Son. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but

have everlasting life" (John 3:16). This is the gospel within the Gospel. The beginning is with God, not with men. When God loves, He loves a whole world. Love without suffering, love without sacrifice, is no love. In deep reverence I may say that God paid a great price for His love. The world was lost. It could only be saved in one way. For a moment I must lay my pen down: Have you a son whom you love more than yourself? God gave His only Son.

The war taught us to give our children. I can picture myself standing again on the little railway station. The train took the last curve. Our son Willy stood at the window. It was the last time on earth that I ever saw his beloved features. Yes, we were brave, but our hearts bled. It was the inexorable "Must!" God gave His Son voluntarily. He could not give more. He gave the best He had. "What shall I do? I will send my beloved son" (Luke 20:13). And the Son went willingly. He was not disobedient. He did not turn back. He suffered scourging in patience, and turned His cheek to him who smote; He did not turn away His face from shame and spitting (Isa. 50:6). I seem almost to hear a gentle voice saying: "Could I do more? Could I give more?"

A gift must be accepted. "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his

name" (John 1:12). The Gospel is so simple. Faith is like a hand stretched out to take the promise of the Father. What does it mean to receive Jesus? To receive Jesus means to bid Jesus welcome, to accept Him as our Redeemer and Saviour.

God stretches out His hand to you. You must take it. Of what use to you is a gift if you will not receive it? A general amnesty was proclaimed for delinquencies during field-service. The only condition was that one should report oneself within a month to the local authorities. A certain non-commissioned officer, a capable and respected soldier, had a blot in his past, a crime which had never been discovered. Should he confess, and obtain forgiveness? What would his commanding officer and his friends think of him? How often he has passed his chief's door while on duty, without the courage to go in! It was the last day and hour when he finally screwed up his courage, and presented himself before his superior. Had he not come, he would never have obtained forgiveness.

A gift, to be of use, must therefore be accepted. If you do not possess the assurance of forgiveness, kneel down, stretch out your hands to the Saviour, and cry, like the publican: "God, be merciful to me a sinner!" Before you rise to your feet again, you will, like the man sick of the palsy, hear the words from the Saviour's lips: "My son, thy sins are forgiven thee!"

"Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift" (2 Cor. 9:15). The simplest way to accept a gift is to give thanks for it. Now you have the knowledge that God loves not merely the world in general but you in particular. Now you can say: "But he was wounded for *my* transgressions, he was bruised for *my* iniquities: the chastisement of *my* peace was upon him; and *with his stripes I am healed*" (Isa. 53:5).

A gift must be made use of. An energetic old lady used to say: "Use your legs, and you have them." A blacksmith has more strength in his arm than I have. I wield the pen and he the hammer, and a hammer is heavier than the pen.

Once my daughter wanted to make me a Christmas present. But first of all she made sure that I would use it. When she was alone with me she said: "Daddy, if I make you a Christmas present, will you promise to use it?" I hesitated, but as she assured me that it would not hurt me, I promised. I will not tell you what the present was. I can only say that it caused her the greatest happiness to see me use her present every day.

If I give someone a present, I am pleased if he values it and makes use of it. God has given you a present of unspeakable value. Do you value it, do you make use of it sufficiently? I often have the feeling that we do not make enough use of God's present.

Once a miner was converted. He was well

known for his ungovernable temper. His comrades used to try to anger him. The coal was carried, from the place where it was hewn to the entrance of the shaft, in a little truck which ran on rails. The miner had just loaded his truck full, when the back wheels came off the track. The truck was heavily laden, but he managed to get the wheels on again. Then the front wheels came off. The foreman was standing at a little distance, and, instead of helping the man, he merely watched, expecting the man to fly into one of his rages. What was his astonishment when he saw the miner leave his truck and, taking off his cap, begin to sing, with folded hands:

*"I need Thee, precious Jesus;
I need a friend like Thee!
A friend to soothe and comfort,
A friend to care for me."*

Then he soon got the truck on the rails again. The miner knew how to make use of his present. "He that hath the son hath life" (1 John 5:12). You may be full of virtue, you may go to church, you may read your Bible, you may be interested in and work for the Mission, you may be a clergyman or a preacher, but if you do not make use of this gift of God there is no life in you, and you are lost. God offers you the first gift. Have you accepted it? Do you make use of it? Have you accepted Jesus? *Have you peace with God?*

Our God is a God who gives. We men often have quite a wrong idea of our heavenly Father. We imagine we have to force something from Him. This is a false idea. On the contrary, God rejoices when He can give us anything. "Ye have not," He says, "because ye ask not."

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the father of lights" (James 1:17). The greatest gift which He gave to a fallen world was His Son. When God loves, He loves a whole world; when He gives, He gives His Son (John 3:16).

Have you already received this gift? Once more I feel urged to ask this question. You can have everything; but you may possess all the world's riches, and still, without Jesus, you will be poor. A gift must be accepted. Wherever men's thoughts fly to Gethsemane and Golgotha the Saviour is knocking at their hearts. Will you not open your heart to Him? When you have received this first gift at God's hand, when you have the certain knowledge that the Saviour died for your sins and that you have received forgiveness, God offers you a second gift.

The Holy Spirit is the second gift of the Father. "Repent and be baptized . . . and ye shall receive *the gift of the Holy Ghost*" (Acts 2:38). St. Peter said to Simon: "Do you think that the *gift of God* may be purchased with money?" (Acts 8:20). "And they of the circumcision which be-

lieved were astonished . . . because that on the Gentiles also " (in the house of Cornelius) " was poured out *the gift of the Holy Ghost* " (Acts 10:47).

God has given us these two precious gifts. He is not *going* to give them; He *has* given them. His Son, His Spirit.

What must be done with a gift? It must be *given, taken, and used*. May God make all things clear to us, that we may receive the Whitsun gift, the fulness and strength of Spirit, just as we have received the first gift. We were justified through faith, and so shall we, through faith, be sanctified. "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him" (Col. 2:6).

Why, after having given us His Son, did God then give us this second gift? The Father knows best what His children need. It is His purpose. He will make something out of us men to His glory. We are not like Jesus; our words are often harsh, untrue; evil thoughts arise in our hearts. We do not act like Jesus. We are selfish, seek our own glory, our own advantage. The Holy Spirit will change all this. "Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee" (Isa. 43:4). Have you children of your own? Can you understand that our Father delights in His children? He wishes you to think like Jesus. He would hear Jesus in your words, he would see Jesus in your life and in your works.

You must become as a sweet odour of Christ. Violet perfume recalls violets; you, in your life, must recall Jesus.

You have been converted, and now it is your dearest wish to grow strong in the Spirit. You have been unsuccessful, relying on your strength. Your life is a continual low tide and high tide, more low tide than high tide. And now the Father comes bringing you the gift of the Holy Spirit. God's first gift was the Saviour, who died for your sins; now He brings you the gift of the Holy Spirit who will sanctify you.

Some years ago I attended a conference at Soedetalja. Our Swedish friends have a glorious word for the Holy Spirit—"Hjelper." The Holy Spirit helps you to pray (Rom. 8:26). The Spirit prays in me, for me and through me. Through "the anointing which ye have received of him" we are brought to a right understanding of God's word (1 John 2:27). Every good thought, every striving after a life in Christ, enters our hearts through the Spirit alone. He helps us to fight against sin. He helps us in our work, in sickness and in suffering.

The Holy Spirit is the Helper. In all reverence I would say: "The Spirit helped our Saviour." How often may the Spirit not have whispered into His ear: "I am with thee"! The Spirit was beside Him in the bitter conflict in Gethsemane and on the wearisome road to Golgotha. "*Christ, who*

through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God” (Heb. 9:14).

Without the fulness of the Spirit you can never lead a spiritual life. The new birth is the first gift; it is also a precious gift; I will not undervalue it. But you need the second gift which God is holding out to you. God has given.

You may accept this gift. Have you received the Holy Spirit? Bid Him welcome into your heart. He will never come down out of the attic unless you ask Him to do so. Have you already done this? Does the Holy Spirit fill the whole house? The question is simple. You can only answer “Yes” or “No.” Has the Lord given me a message for you? Please put down the book for a moment. Kneel before your God in silence. Once again you will hear the same question, and this time not from my lips: “Have you received the Holy Spirit?”

My brother, I know how this question hurts *you*. You know from experience what it is to be filled with God’s Spirit. Perhaps it is many years ago now. You will never forget the hour when, in simple faith, you took the second great gift of the Father. Was it at a meeting where God’s Spirit worked with great power? Was it in conversation with a Christian friend that you had the experience? Or was it alone with God in your study? The place where it happened is unimportant, but you know that the event has become the great fact

in your life. You have had victory and joy. The Holy Spirit needed your testimony.

You have no longer this fulness of Spirit. The strength, which once filled your life has disappeared. Perhaps you thought that it sufficed if you were once filled. You have forgotten that the apostles were often filled with the Holy Spirit after the first Pentecost (Acts 4:31). There is only one baptism of the Spirit, but it is possible—I may say, it is necessary—often to be filled with the Holy Spirit. You cannot store up grace in a granary. In deep humility, I must confess that I, also, have made this mistake. I can sympathize with you. Perhaps you have grieved the Holy Spirit. The devil tries to make you think that your baptism with the Spirit was only an imaginary experience; perhaps he even maintains that there is no fulness of the Spirit, or that the Spirit has departed from you.

What can I advise you? If one loses anything, one looks for it at the place where it was lost. I have good news for you. Act like some one who has never received the fulness of the Spirit.

You must accept. God is holding out the gift to you; you must take it. But before you can receive it you must fulfil three conditions. For the first gift there are absolutely no conditions. It is there for everybody. But with the second gift it is different. God gives His Holy Spirit "*to them that obey him*" (Acts 5:32). If you are now prepared

to obey God's will in all things, to submit your own will to His, He will give you the second gift. Ought you now to go on praying until you feel that God has granted your request? No—any more than you would tell some one who was seeking Jesus to pray until he felt that God had accepted him. You would say rightly: "You must take the gift." And so I say to you now: "You must take what God offers you." Receive in faith this gift from the hands of your Heavenly Father (Luke 11:13). Perhaps you will notice no change in yourself; do not be troubled at this.

A young girl asks me for advice. She had no inner assurance of salvation, no happiness, no peace in her life. I should say to her: "Repeat to yourself, 'Jesus loves me. He has received me!'" I am sure her face will soon begin to shine with inward joy. Have you submitted yourself to God's will, and prayed to Him to fill you with His Spirit? Have you received this gift in faith? I advise you: Repeat to yourself: "I am a temple of the Holy Ghost." What you received in faith will, through God, become a reality in your life. God's will, which perhaps seemed hard at first, will become to you a thing of beauty and glory. More and more you will learn to say: "O God, I love to do Thy will!"

Do not be disappointed if you do not experience any unusual, exuberant feelings. The railway carriages stand waiting. The doors are opened; the

train is soon filled with passengers. But it does not move yet. Slowly the engine glides out of its shed to the front of the train. At once it is coupled on. All this happens so quietly that none of the passengers notices anything. Now the guard blows his whistle, and the train begins to move. The Holy Spirit is God's great engine. Faith is the coupling which connects the powerful engine with the train.

Are you prepared to submit your whole life, all your powers, to God's guidance? Will you allow the Holy Spirit to take possession of your whole house? Will you hand over all the keys, even the smallest, the most secret?

On the outskirts of a little town in the hills there lived a poor shoemaker with his numerous family. The whole town belonged to the great lord of the castle, with the single exception of the shoemaker's house. This annoyed the nobleman. He dismounted from his horse and entered the workshop. "Sell me your house!" he cried. "I will pay you much money for it." "I will only sell my cottage if you cover this table with gold pieces," said the shoemaker. The baron took his purse and began to lay the gold pieces on the table. "No," said the shoemaker, "you must stand them on edge." But the baron did not have so much money. There was nothing for it but to go back to his castle. And for ever afterwards he had to endure the thought that the shoemaker could always say: "The town belongs to the two of us, the baron and myself."

Have you given up everything? Can you look up to God and say: "All that is mine is thine"? (John 17:10). Then, and only then, will you be able to add: "And all that is thine is mine." Jesus will be glorified in you through the Holy Spirit.

You must make use of the gift. How profitable to Jesus your life will be! You will shed blessings upon all around you. Do you long for a revival? The Lord will hear your prayer. The Spirit needs men and women who will submit themselves and their wills to His own leadership. There was a revival in Ephesus. The number of the twelve soon increased. I am sure the Church did not long meet in a little back street. The Word of the Lord grew in power and might. They carried out a drastic cleansing and purging among themselves. They did not take their indecent books to the apostle, they burned them publicly. It would make a very big bonfire if all the indecent books and dirty novels in any of our great cities were burned in one huge pile. The next time St. Paul went to Ephesus every little boy in the street could have told him where to find the Christians. Strength radiated from them; they had received the Holy Spirit. "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" (1 Cor. 6:19). "Ye are the temple of the living God" (2 Cor. 6:16). "Ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the spirit" (Eph. 2:22).

In deep reverence and humility, and yet in all faith, you may say: "The Holy Spirit dwelleth in me."

God has two gifts for you. You have accepted the first, and it has brought you happiness. Will you not receive the second in faith from His hands? It will bring you power.

*"Thy Holy Spirit, Lord, alone
Can turn our heart from sin.
His power alone can sanctify
And keep us pure within.
O Spirit of Faith and Love,
Work in our midst, we pray,
And purify each waiting heart;
Baptize us with pow'r today."*

X

FULNESS AND POWER

1 John 5:14, 16

IN the last chapter we have seen that God has given mankind two great gifts, which we must receive and use.

God gave His Son. “And the word was made flesh and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the father), full of grace and truth ” (John 1:14). To be sure, the Son had appeared, as an angel or messenger of Jehovah, in human form to individual men in the Old Testament. He came to Hagar and Abraham. He said to Jacob: “I am the God of Bethel.” He spoke to Moses out of the burning bush, and to Gideon and to Manoel. In the fulness of time this eternal Son of God became man, taking upon Himself our nature through the Virgin Mary.

In His short life on earth He glorified His Father and revealed Him to mankind. He died for us and for our sins upon the cross, and redeemed us with His most precious blood. When He had finished His work for us on earth, He ascended to Heaven, where He continued His work as our Mediator, praying for us eternally and giving us victory in

our lives by virtue of His victory over death. Dear reader, have you accepted this redemption from the guilt and power of sin?

"But the comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you" (John 14:26). The Holy Spirit came to fill Jesus' place; He could not come until Jesus had ascended in glory. His work began at the first Whitsuntide. The Holy Spirit was also at work in the Old Testament, but only temporarily in particular persons for a definite purpose. Bezaleel and Joshua were filled with God's Spirit (Ex. 31:3; Gen. 34:9). The Spirit rested upon the seventy elders (Num. 11:25), upon Gideon and Jephthah, and spoke through David (2 Sam. 23:2), and through the prophets. But His work on earth began at Pentecost. The Holy Spirit is God's second great gift to mankind. Have you accepted it?

The Holy Spirit is a Person. May I remind the reader once more of this important truth? The Holy Spirit speaks through men, urges them on or holds them back. One can obey Him, but one can also grieve Him. This is not merely a theological question. If the Spirit is only a power, I could try and get more of it, but if the Holy Spirit is a Person, He will demand more of me. Let us submit ourselves absolutely to the influence of the Spirit, that He may fill our whole lives.

It is important to distinguish between the work of the Son and the work of the Holy Spirit. The Saviour died *for us*; the Holy Spirit works *within us* and *through us*. If the Saviour had not obtained forgiveness for us through His death upon the cross, the Holy Spirit would not be able to work in us. It is a spurious sanctification which does not rest on the Cross of Golgotha. We must first be born again before we can be sanctified. In the same way, the great sacrifice on Golgotha would be in vain did not the Holy Spirit work within us, teaching us to accept the sacrifice in faith.

The first action of the Holy Spirit in us is the new birth. Every coin has two sides, a back and a face. We call the process through which a man comes from death to life, regeneration, considered from the divine side, and, considered from the human side, conversion.

“Why do you speak of converted people and not of believers?” a brother asked me once after a conference. I answered: “One may have belief in one’s head without the life from God having come into our souls. ‘Conversion’ is a good word; everyone knows what is meant by it.”

The word “conversion” means “turning round.” You may turn your face or your back to anyone. In the Old Testament the word is used in Isaiah 6:10. In the New Testament it is used twice referring to disciples of Jesus. We may assume that the disciples in St. Matthew 11:3 and

the Apostle Peter in St. Luke 22:32 had already been born again or, as we say, converted. But they had had backslidings. There is only one resource: "Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the Lord of Hosts" (Mal. 3:7). In these verses the word is very properly translated "return." You cannot be "converted" every day; you can only be converted once; but if you have strayed from the path you can "return."

Conversion means "turning round." Many of us know, to be sure, that this is not always an easy matter. It is not a matter of drilling soldiers on the parade-ground and saying, "Left turn! Forward, march!" With many it is like a ship trying to turn in a high sea. At first the ship does not answer to the helm. The waves beat against her sides. She seems to be sinking. Everything works against us, sins of the past life, worldly connection, circumstances, relations. One must be converted, but one cannot convert oneself. It is the old difficulty. Our will opposes itself to God's sovereignty. "Stretch out thy hand!" said the Lord to the man with the withered hand. That is just what he cannot do. "Be converted!" said St. Paul to the people (Acts 3:19).

The Lord was saying how hardly a rich man shall enter the kingdom of Heaven. "Who then can be saved?" asked the disciple, and the Lord answered joyfully: "*The things which are impossible with men are possible with God.*"

Every conversion is, in fact, a miracle of grace. This great event in a human life has two sides, divine and human. Considered from the human side, we call it conversion, and from the divine side, regeneration. The Saviour invites you: "Come unto me, all ye that are heavy laden." But you must come of your own free will. It would be of no use if you were forced to come. Nevertheless the Lord must give the strength to your will. In theory the question is insoluble, just as it is impossible to reconcile free-will with divine sovereignty; but in practice the question solves itself. No one will claim to have converted himself by his own strength. We cannot redeem ourselves. Jesus is our Redeemer. The Holy Spirit is the moving power within us; we yield to this power. That is conversion.

The Holy Spirit was at work in our souls before our conversion. The Spirit planted in our hearts the yearning after something higher. Every good thought comes from the Spirit. The Spirit shows us our sins and the way of salvation, and makes God's word alive within us.

At our new birth the Holy Spirit enters into us. He works no longer from without but from within. It is very important that we should rightly grasp this truth. From the moment of the new birth we become temples of the Holy Ghost. "Now, if any man have not the spirit of Christ, he is none of his" (Rom. 8:9).

But to have the Holy Spirit does not necessarily imply that we are already filled with God's Spirit. Once we went to see the royal castles in Bavaria, and marvelled at all the magnificence which we saw. But we hardly had time to see everything properly. We had to follow the guide. I imagine there are many private rooms there that we did not see. They were closed. The Holy Spirit can only take possession of our house in so far as we open the rooms. If we open all the doors and hand over all the keys, the Spirit will take full possession of us. Have you rooms in your life, in your family life, in your business life, into which the Spirit may not enter?

The fulness of the Spirit comes to us as soon as we submit our whole lives to Him in perfect obedience. Will you do this now? It does not matter whether you finish this chapter or not. It is far better you should go down on your knees and, in the light of understanding which you possess, renounce all the wrong and doubtful things in your life, and give yourself wholly, absolutely, to the Lord. Then you will be filled with the Holy Spirit. You are waiting for God to perform some miracle within you, waiting, perhaps, for spiritual experiences and visions, forgetting that God is waiting for you to consecrate yourself to Him, that He may fill you with His Spirit.

If there are things in your life which you cannot

renounce, pray to God to give you strength, and He will hear your prayer.

This consecration often means a fierce struggle. We can only gain the victory through an absolute break with our old life. Here again it is the Holy Spirit that gives us the will to do this. The results which appear sooner or later show what a change has come about in our lives. It is possible to be filled with the Holy Spirit immediately upon conversion; as a rule it takes place later, and with many of God's children it does not take place at all. This means a terrible loss for their own inner lives and for all around them. Are you filled with the Holy Spirit?

Can one call this surrender of one's whole life to the Holy Spirit, this first filling of one's soul with the Holy Spirit, "Baptism with the Spirit"?

In St. Matthew 3:11; St. Mark 1:8; St. Luke 3:16; St. John 1:26 we read that the Lord Jesus Christ will baptize us Himself with the Spirit. In the Acts of the Apostles, baptism with the Spirit occurs twice—at the Feast of Pentecost (Acts 1:5), and in the house of Cornelius (Acts 11:16). The expression, "baptism with the Holy Spirit," does not occur in the epistles. Are we to conclude from this that the baptism with the Holy Spirit is something different from being filled with the Holy Spirit? This is a difficult question and cannot be answered with a definite "Yes" or "No." Should the first entry of the Holy Spirit into our hearts at

the new birth be specially called "baptism" with the Spirit? The expression, "baptism" with the Holy Spirit would certainly seem to be more applicable to the beginning of our spiritual life than to its highest development. At any rate, it is significant that we are not told to look for baptism with the Holy Spirit in the epistles. We are rather exhorted to become filled with the Holy Spirit, after the Spirit has entered our hearts at our conversion.

When we take all this into consideration, had we not better consecrate our whole being in obedience and devotion to the Holy Spirit who is within us already, rather than pray for a special baptism with the Spirit? At all costs I want to avoid arguing about words and expressions. There are men intimately acquainted with the Holy Scriptures who describe this first being filled with the Holy Spirit as "baptism with the Holy Spirit." *The important thing is that we should become children of God possessing the fulness of the Holy Spirit.*

A short time ago I received the following letter:

"I have read your chapter again today entitled: 'How shall I receive the full Pentecostal blessing?' You write: 'Those of God's children who have not received the Pentecostal blessing are orphans.' I must, alas, confess that I have not received this blessing, but I have a deep longing for it. *I must* have this blessing, otherwise I shall never achieve victory in daily life. I am in chains and cannot get free; weeping and wailing is of no use. Today I weep over my defeat and then in three weeks, per-

haps, I do exactly the same thing again. The Bible says: 'Walk in the spirit, that ye may not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.' When I receive the Pentecostal blessing, I am sure I shall live in the presence of the Lord and overcome all sin. I am heartily grateful to you for your clear explanation. You say that we must take seven steps in order to reach the blessing. I am at the fifth step. I pray sincerely in Jesus' name to the Father that He may send me the Holy Spirit, as Jesus Himself taught us to do. I have realized that I must have the fulness of the Holy Spirit. I must go forward; I cannot rest till I have it. The Spirit cannot take full possession of me as long as I am bound with these chains. I must be free at all costs. If I am a slave myself, I cannot bear witness to the glorious salvation from the power of sin."

I was deeply moved by this letter, which will find an echo in the heart of many readers. Behind the words of this letter we hear a voice crying out for victory over sin, victory in the daily life and a yearning after the fulness of the Holy Spirit. May God grant these gifts to all of us. Who put this yearning into the heart of the child of God? God Himself. Would the Father give His children this wish, this longing, only to disappoint them? It is impossible. As Jesus said: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

I receive a form saying that there is a registered letter for me at the post office. Of course I believe it. But how do I get possession of the letter? I

must go and fetch it. Somebody offers me a present. What must I do if I want to have it? I must accept it. Many earnest souls pray for forgiveness of their sins for months, for years even. And yet they have no assurance of salvation. Why not? Because they have forgotten to take and give thanks for what is offered them.

F. B. Meyer tells us somewhere a delightful story about his granddaughter. I think grandpapa must have spoiled her, just the least bit in the world. That is a weakness of grandpapas. Whenever he went to town he always brought something back with him for his little grandchild. "Grandpapa, you won't forget to bring me some chocolate when you come home?" coaxed the child. Grandpapa only smiled and said nothing. As he was driving to town next morning he found a note in his overcoat pocket: "Dear Grandpapa, thank you very much for the chocolate you are going to bring me." I am quite sure she was not disappointed when Grandpapa came home in the evening. If we really believe that God has heard our prayer, we must be ready to thank Him, like the little girl, before we have seen the fulfilment of our wish. By thanking God we show our trust in Him.

Many children of God pray for the fulness of the Holy Spirit and never receive it. Why not? Because they will not take it. One must take a gift when it is offered, then give thanks for it and, finally, make use of it.

“And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: And if we know that he hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him” (1 John 5:14, 16). The important thing is to be sure that the thing we pray for is such as God would wish to grant us. Is it God’s will that we should make room in our hearts for the Holy Spirit whom He sent us, so that we, being filled with the Spirit, may become strong in our lives and profitable in our service? There is only one possible answer. It is God’s will that all His children should be filled with the Holy Spirit.

“Therefore I say unto you, what things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them” (Mark 11:24). My brother, do not be satisfied with praying for the fulness of the Spirit. Your prayer will not be answered if you do not accompany it with this act of faith. Faith is not mere expectation. There is a faith which, like the little girl’s, is so sure of the fulfilment of the prayer that the prayer is already as good as granted.

F. B. Meyer did not implant a desire for chocolate in his little grandchild. The wish came out of her own heart. But our heavenly Father has Himself implanted this longing for more strength in our inner life, for the fulness of the Holy Spirit in our hearts. He has given us His promise. I will kneel

down and remind God of His promise and say: "Father, Thou hast given me this definite promise—that Thou wouldst send me Thy Holy Spirit. I have prayed Thee that Thou mightest fulfil my desire in my life. I know that this prayer is in accordance with Thy will and that Thou hast heard it. When I know that my prayer is in accordance with Thy will, I know also that Thou wilt hear it. I know, therefore, that I have received the fulness of the Holy Spirit, for I believe that Thou keepest Thy promise."

"Shall I then be able to feel that I have received the fulness of the Holy Spirit?" I do not know. Some of God's children feel it at once, and there are others, just as sincere, who do not.

"Will this fulness of the Holy Spirit manifest itself outwardly?" Certainly it will, but do not forget when and how. "When will the Spirit manifest itself?" After you have received Him in faith, not before. "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Acts 1:8). God demands that you should trust His word, and, then, when you believe and act as though you already had the promised gift, God will show you that your prayer is realized.

How will this fulness of the Spirit show itself? I have already related how Finney says that the power of the Spirit came upon him like an electric current, so that he could hardly bear it. John Wesley had a similar experience. I do not for a

moment doubt what these men of God have said, but I do not find any mention of similar accompanying phenomena in the Bible, nor a single verse which suggests that we should expect anything of the kind.

It is possible that St. Peter and St. Paul had an experience similar to Finney's, Wesley's and that of other men of God. But even if this was so, God's Spirit did not permit them to tell us of it. Did not the disciples then speak with strange tongues as the Spirit gave them power? Did they not heal the sick and raise the dead? Certainly, but we must not conclude from this that all those who were filled with the Holy Spirit, for instance the Christians in Pisidia and Ephesus, received power to perform such miracles. At any rate, the Bible says nothing about it. We must differentiate between being "full of the Holy Spirit" and being filled for some special task. This being filled for some special task only happened in the case of a few specially blessed men. In all reverence I should like to say that in my opinion this special "being filled" is not so important as "to be full of the Holy Spirit," by which will, heart and soul are transformed into the image of the Saviour. At the time of the apostles, fulness of Spirit was often manifested in prophesying and speaking with tongues, but the highest purpose was a deeper knowledge of the risen Christ, *a life devoted to God's work, to a humble imitation of Christ.*

I will not assert that these manifestations could only have taken place at the time of the apostles. But, from the history of the Church, and from the apostle's significant statement in 1 Corinthians 13:8, we may conclude that these miraculous phenomena were, on the whole, characteristic of, and to some extent essential to, the apostolic period. In the same way it cannot be ascribed to a lack of faith in our churches that these miracles are not more frequent today. The lack of spiritual strength, of all-compelling power, is a more reliable proof that very few of God's children today are full of the Spirit.

Let us not look for miracles, rather *let us pray for new strength, that we may be victorious in our daily struggle; for new inspiration, that we may glorify God in our service.*

In the Acts we read that, as soon as St. Paul was filled with the Holy Spirit, he entered the synagogue and preached that Christ was the Son of God. "But Paul increased the more in strength . . . proving that this is the very Christ" (Acts 9:17, 21, 22).

St. Paul was once caught up to the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:2). That was indeed a marvellous experience. But what we need is not visions nor revelations; we need *strength to testify for Christ.*

XI

SEALED WITH THE SPIRIT

Ephesians 1:13

ONCE, at our morning prayers, we read an important event in the life of Barnabas (Acts 4:37). He was not very rich, but that was not necessary. He was a Levite, and God has made Himself responsible for the well-being of His servants. When he left Cyprus to live in Jerusalem he obtained possession of a piece of land. He was now a land-owner and was doubtless very happy in his new possession.

One day he resolved to sell his field and to give the proceeds to the apostles. Nobody had ordered him to do this. Jesus had become the most important thing in life to him, and he wanted to please Him. He never regretted his decision. He became poor, but he made many others rich. He had always been a man full of lovingkindness, a character shedding sunshine on those around him, and now his heart overflowed with joy. No one who gives to Jesus is ever the loser.

Following immediately upon this scene the Holy Spirit describes another, but this time regarding a sordid man. The picture has a dark background.

“ But a certain man.” The word “ but ” shows us the connection with what went before. The Holy Spirit wants us to consider the two stories side by side and compare them. Ananias, also, belonged to the first little band of believers. He had been baptized, and he attended the meetings. It is not impossible that he had learned to know the joy of preaching God’s word.

Ananias and Sapphira were well-to-do. They owned a farm, and they sold it for the benefit of the common treasury. They probably brought the apostles a much larger sum than Barnabas could do. But they did not understand what it means to give up everything. They kept back part of the money. They wanted to appear great people among their fellows. They lied to God. But they could not stand up before His all-seeing eye. Sudden death snatched them away. They might not work any longer for their Master, and had to appear before Jesus with a lie on their lips.

Ananias was not a free man. It is possible that he had accepted Jesus as the Forgiver of sins, but he knew nothing of His power as Redeemer. He was a slave to his money. Many of God’s children are slaves to their possessions. They have never realized the full salvation. They do not shed sunshine around them, like Barnabas. Their religion does not make them happy. They were like a woman with chronic headache. She would not like to lose her head, and yet it only causes her pain.

The Bible teaches us that the Saviour not only bore the punishment for our sins, but that He also has power to free us from the dominion of sin, here on earth, as well as after death. You need not always fall. Just as the Lord can save a drunkard from the vice of drink, so can He free you from your passionate temper, your pride, your irritability, your anger, your lust, your untruthfulness, or from any other bond of sin. It is your own fault if your life does not overflow with happiness, if you do not shed blessings on all around you, if you are not strong to glorify Christ and to carry off the victory in your daily life. Thousands of God's children have had this glorious experience of full salvation. Pray to the Lord that He may grant you, too, a place in the kingdom of His grace. He has given us all things that pertain not only to life but also to godliness (2 Peter 1:3).

In this verse from the Bible with which I have headed this chapter, the apostle is speaking of three stages in the development of the Christians in Ephesus. They had heard the word of truth, the message of salvation; they had received the word in faith, and had been sealed with the Holy Spirit. We also must pass through these three stages in our life of faith: *Hearing, believing, and being sealed.*

Ye have heard the word of truth. The word of God does not flatter, it tells us the naked truth. It speaks to us of our sins and our corrupt hearts. To

be sure, the unconverted man does not like this. God's Spirit must open the heart. Then in a flash we realize: "These words apply to me." To hear the word of truth is the first step on the way of life. How important it is, then, in Christian families that a passage from the Bible should be read every day. How sad it is when there is no family altar, no family prayer in a Christian family!

The word of God is the sword of the Spirit. Make use of it when speaking with souls who are seeking Christ. Do not give your own opinions; they carry no authority. Tell them simply what God says in His Word.

The Bible is a light to lighten us in dark hours, a rock on which we may rest, bread to feed us, a sword to protect us. How is it that there are so many false doctrines today? It is because men have not thorough knowledge of God's word. So they are easily led astray.

Have you ears to hear the word of truth, even when it shows you your mistakes and sins? If so, you are on the way that leads to peace.

The second stage is to accept the word in faith. Merely to hear it is not sufficient. We must make it our own. We must be able to say: "I am saved through His wounds." Jesus has borne the weight of my sins, also, He has reconciled me with God.

Now comes the third stage: Sealed. I think I may assume that most of my readers are not merely

hearers of the word, but have also accepted it in faith. Have you already reached the third stage? Has the Holy Spirit been able to seal you? The Ephesians knew very well how important this sealing is. Ephesus was a port where there was a considerable trade, especially in timber. The timber-laden ships came from the neighbouring ports. The cargo would be unloaded in the harbour. The dealers bought the logs and put their seal on them. As a rule, they would not take the wood away with them immediately. They would leave it in the harbour with the other timber. But it was their property; they had chosen it, and put their stamp upon it. Afterwards, they would send their trusty servant with their signet to fetch the wood. The stamp would be compared with the signet, and the servant took his master's property, so that he might make use of it.

Have you been sealed? The Master can only seal what is His own. Do you think He will seal what does not belong to Him? Barnabas was sealed. He gave up everything. Ananias could not be sealed, for he brought only a part. Dear reader, I would impress upon you how important it is for you, this third stage at which we have arrived in our talks about the Holy Spirit. Everything depends on whether you can be sealed with the Holy Spirit.

"A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse"
(Song of Solomon 4:12). The Master has the key.

He alone can enter. There is no admittance except on business. If the devil wishes to enter, he finds the door locked. God Himself shut the door of the ark behind Noah, so Noah felt perfectly safe, although the waters raged round the ark outside. He knew no water could enter where God had shut the door. You are "a spring shut up." Only the Master may draw from it. The bride is a "fountain sealed." Do you belong wholly to the Saviour or have the world, the flesh, and your own self, also, claims upon you?

When parcels are sent abroad, they must be carefully packed, and afterwards sealed. Unsealed parcels are not accepted for transmission. It is a joy to see the seal come out sharp and clear. Jesus longs to rejoice over you, too. He desires to be glorified in His saints (2 Thess. 1:10). He wishes His own image to shine forth from within us, "that he might present it to himself a glorious church."

There are three things to be observed in sealing. The signet must come into immediate contact with the wax. Secondly, a successful impression resembles the signet. Lastly, the contents is rendered secure by the seal.

Contact, resemblance and security are the three chief points in sealing. A child of God who is sealed with the Spirit is in contact with the Master, is transformed into His image, and is protected by His Spirit. The wax must come into contact with the signet. But what must happen first? The wax

must become soft. This is done by heating. The sealing is not the first work of the Holy Spirit. Silver must be melted in the furnace in order to be purified from impure matter. The Master Himself sits by the furnace and watches the fire. The children of Levi must be purged before they can bring and offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness (Mal. 3:3).

The most valuable lessons are learned in the school of suffering. The captain of our salvation was made perfect through sufferings (Heb. 2:10), and His disciples also can only reach the kingdom of heaven by learning their lesson in the school of suffering. Through much tribulation, we must enter the kingdom of God. The Lord lays you on a bed of sickness; you think that, as mother of a large family, you are indispensable. He is making the wax soft. He takes your beloved child from you, or you lose your position. Why does the Lord do this? The wax must become soft. You are very much attached to certain people; they have meant much for your inner development. And now the Lord takes them from you. You imagine, perhaps, that you could achieve great things, and the Master gives you plain, wearisome labour to do. Others are promoted above you, you have to stand aside. Unworthy motives are unjustly attributed to you. All this is painful. God brings you together with people who hurt you. You may say, "My way is hidden from my God," forgetting that

the Master is watching over you, and making the wax soft.

The sealing is an inward process. It is possible that the Spirit may seal one of my readers while he reads this book. But if the sealing is done in secret, the results are open and clear. You will notice it; those around you will notice it. Instead of playing with your sins, especially with your own favourite sin, you will give them up altogether. You will be ready to suffer anything rather than grieve the Holy Spirit who has sealed you.

Your old selfish life caused you a great deal of trouble. How ashamed you were of your own shameless self! The sealing has a separating force. It separates you from the things of this world, and it separates you from your old self.

Resemblance to the Master, transformation into His image, is a consequence of the sealing. Do you bear the seal of the Spirit? Moses' face shone when he came out of God's presence, although he was himself unaware of it. The high priests could see that the disciples had been with Jesus, and those around you will also notice it in you.

There are children of God who fear that they may lose the forgiveness of their sins again. If you are sealed, the forgiveness of your sins is also sealed. You will enter into that inner peace which God has promised to His children.

As God had shut the door behind Noah, it was not necessary for Noah to hold on to the door with

all his might from inside in order to prevent the water coming in. There was a window in the roof of the ark. However much we are besieged with difficulties, the way up to heaven always remains open. Since Noah did not have to bother himself about the door, he had time to attend to the window in the roof. Is it clear to you now that through this secret intercourse with God you will become transfigured into the glorious image of the Master? The invisible will become a reality. Jesus will be more of a reality to you than those nearest and dearest to you.

God can only put His seal upon you when you have consecrated your whole life to Him. You will find the name of the artist on his picture. Would Rubens or any other great painter have his name put on the work of any dauber?

If your thoughts and actions are worldly, if you judge others harshly, if there is a lack of humility in your daily life, if you strive only after your own honour and always want the first place, can the Lord put His seal upon you? Your life is still rooted in self. The life of self is a life of sin. Where self is paramount, there is no room for the development of the Christ life. Dear brethren, if we yearn to be sealed with the Spirit, we must first renounce the self life.

How is it that many of God's children consecrate themselves to God at some special, solemn moment, at a meeting where the Spirit of God works with

great power, and then afterwards fall back into the old life? It is that God has not been able to seal them, because their devotion was no perfect devotion, because at some time or other they did not submit their will to that of the Spirit. God accepts no half measures with His children. When the priest in the Old Testament had chosen a lamb from the flock for a burnt sacrifice, he examined it very carefully and only if it was without blemish did he put the seal of the temple upon it.

Our Saviour was sealed at His baptism, when the Father said: "This is my beloved son in whom I am well pleased." His was the only devotion which was entirely without blemish, and it covers the shortcomings in our devotion. We find in 2 Timothy 2:19, the seal that God puts upon those of His children who devote themselves to Him: "The Lord knoweth them that are his." And, "Let everyone that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

Right of ownership and consecration form the double seal. We do not belong to our Saviour only because He bought us, but of our own free will. As on the brow of the high priest, so on ours, stands: "Holiness to the Lord." Impure thoughts have no place there. "*Holiness becometh thy house*" (Ps. 93:5). Sealing with the Spirit means fulness of Spirit, and the Spirit is a holy Spirit, a Spirit that sanctifies.

The sealing is not conversion. When in faith we

accept forgiveness of sins we "set to our seal that God is true" (John 3:33). When we devote our lives to God, He sets His seal on us that we are true. If you follow your own desires, your devotion is not sincere. In St. John 2:24 we read that unto many He cannot commit Himself. Can Jesus commit Himself and His honour to you?

We are sealed for service. The sealing is practical, it leads us to our work. We are not sealed in order to lead a contemplative life. That would be selfish. The Saviour said that God the Father had sealed Him (John 6:27). His was a life of loving service from beginning to end. He did not live for Himself, but for others. "Others!" was His life's motto. If we want to be disciples of Jesus we must make St. Paul's words our own: "God, whose I am, and whom I serve" (Acts 27:23).

Security is the third object of sealing. Darius sealed the lions' den so that no unauthorized person might enter. The high priests sealed the grave of Jesus. God Himself broke these seals. The Spirit seals "unto the day of redemption" (Eph. 5:30). Just as a magnet draws small pieces of iron to itself by imparting its magnetism to the iron, so the Lord will draw His people to Himself when He has given them His Holy Spirit.

That which is sealed is safe. "I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day" (2 Tim. 1:12), says

St. Paul. "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation," says St. Peter (Peter 1:5).

There are moments in our lives when our whole spiritual existence is at stake. Many a Christian worker has ruined his whole subsequent life and work in one weak hour. He had not been sealed, because his devotion was not perfect. The devil knows well where there is a weak spot in the wall, and on it he concentrates his attack. So many defeats in our daily lives occur because we do not listen to the warnings of the Holy Spirit. To be sealed is to be secure. "Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me" (Ps. 139:5).

A sealed life is a life in which Jesus can shine through us, in which we ourselves reflect His glory. You have heard the word. You have received it in faith. Will you not now receive the seal of the Holy Spirit?

*"I want that adorning Divine,
Thou only, my God, can'st bestow;
I want in those beautiful garments to shine
Which mark out Thy household below.*

*"I want to be marked for Thine own,
Thy seal on my forehead to wear;
And have that 'new name' on the mystic white
stone
Which none but Thyself can declare."*

XII

WHENCE THOU ART FALLEN

Revelation 2:5

IS it possible for a child of God who has once had the glorious experience of the fulness of the Spirit, to go back in his spiritual life? Can one lose the fulness of the Spirit? We must, unfortunately, answer this question in the affirmative. One is bound to lose every blessing, including the Pentecostal blessing, if one does not hand it on to others. We are not given this wonderful gift to store it up in secret. We cannot keep any blessing by our own strength. Jesus must keep us and our blessings. We lose every blessing if we try to keep it ourselves.

One may be sealed with the Holy Spirit, but the seal can be broken. He whose "delight is in the law of the Lord" shall be "like a tree planted by the rivers, that bringeth forth his fruit in due season" (Ps. 1:2-3). This is true. But the psalmist does not say that the righteous man grows like a tree. Our inward growth is quite different. The tree grows whether it wants to or not. We grow only if we consecrate ourselves continually to the Lord, that His Spirit may work in us. We must

learn that, apart from Jesus, we are nothing, and that we ourselves, without Jesus, are incapable of overcoming our old nature. "The old Adam is too strong for the young Melanchthon."

Jesus demands that you should walk in humility, rather suffering wrong than doing wrong. It is His will that you should go the second mile with the man who compels you, and that you should love your enemies. How can you fulfil these demands? Through your own strength? Never! Through the strength of your new nature? Not even that. You can only possess the patience, the love, the unselfishness of Jesus in your daily life, if in faith Jesus dwells in you, and works through you. If you attempt this by your own strength, you and those around you will be disappointed.

Have you ever watched art students copying a great masterpiece in a picture gallery? There is a young student working at a Raphael. She is expending all her skill and patience in order to make a good copy. But it will not come right. She is always dissatisfied. But if the spirit of Raphael could enter into her, if the master hand guided her brush, the difficulties would soon vanish. Christ performs both functions in us; He gives us the will to act, and also the means to carry out our will.

But did I not give myself wholly to the Lord before the Holy Spirit was able to seal me? Certainly, but upon this first act of consecration must follow *a life of continual consecration and self-*

surrender. The potter can only make the vessel if the clay remains the whole time in His hands.

A splendid special train conveys from London to Keswick many of the persons who attend that annual conference. When you gave yourself to the Lord, before your sealing, you are like the man who got into the train at Euston Square. But you are not immediately in Keswick. If you stop in the train, the engine will certainly take you there, probably with little or no delay. The train only stops at Crewe. You can get out there. But if you do not get in again, you will be left behind at Crewe. On the other side of the platform there is a train going back to London. If you get into this train, you will soon arrive back at your starting point. I know many people who have stopped at Crewe, and still more who have gone back to London. It is possible to have had the fulness of Spirit, power in prayer, victory in daily life, and yet to lose it all again. "Ye did run well, who did hinder you?" says St. Paul to the Galatians. Sanctification has not only a present and a future; it also has a past.

The church at Ephesus could already look back upon its best days. The Holy Spirit had first come upon the twelve disciples of whom we have spoken in an earlier chapter. Then there was a revival. This always begins with God's children. There was cleansing and repentance. They realized what their past life had been. The obstacles to a true life were publicly acknowledged and removed.

Then the word of God grew in strength among them and gained the victory (Acts 14:20). Can a child of God who has been sealed by the Holy Spirit go back? About thirty years after St. Paul had sent his wonderful letter to the Ephesians through Tychichus, there came a second.

A message out of the mouth of the risen Lord Himself. How their hearts must have beaten as the priest opened the letter in the midst of the congregation! What joy filled their hearts when they heard how the Lord praised them! But why do the priest's lips suddenly begin to tremble? "I have something against thee!" Jesus has something against us. Thou, Timotheus of the Church of Ephesus, thou hast fallen. Thou lovest me no longer as at first.

Thou hast fallen—how terrible these words sound! There had been backslidings. To be sure, one could not see this from the outside. They were as busy as ever; in fact, they were perhaps working more than ever, for people often try to make up for a lack of effort in the prayer chamber by a great show of activity in their daily lives. The activity and zeal of the church was manifest; meetings were held, the Gospel was preached. They never tired.

They loved their church and were proud of her. One may work for one's church and be ready to make great sacrifices for it and yet be spiritually on a very low plane.

They had the true doctrine. They permitted no evil customs, like Pergamos and Thyatira. They were active, efficient and orthodox, and yet the Lord said: "Thou hast fallen." Did they know this themselves in their hearts? Samson did not know that the Lord had departed from him (Judges 16:20). Hosea cries: "Strangers have devoured his strength, and he knoweth it not: yea, gray hairs are here and there upon him, yet he knoweth not" (Hos. 7:9). One does not go backwards suddenly. It happens so gradually that one cannot see oneself as one really is.

Thou lovest me no longer as at first. There had been a time when Jesus was the most important thing in his life. There are people who imagine that we are slighting Jesus when we speak of the Holy Spirit and the fulness of the Spirit. You know better. It is the purpose of the Holy Spirit to glorify Jesus in you just as Jesus strove to glorify the Father. Jesus never meant more to you than when the Holy Spirit took full possession of you.

You were happiest when you could be alone with Jesus. You did not hesitate when He set you a task to do. You were ready to dare anything for Him. You were only happy when you could please Him. Your heart glowed when you could speak of Him to others. You would rather have died than grieved Him. You did nothing without asking His advice. No sacrifice was too great for Jesus.

*“My life is Thine, Lord Jesus,
Bought with Thy blood Divine,
And given to Thee with gladness—
No longer mine, but Thine.”*

You have loved Him, and, I tell you, Jesus is worthy of such love, and He has a right to expect it from us. And now? You are still an active member of the Church. God's children think a great deal of you, perhaps. But you cannot deceive the Master. He looks at you sadly and says: “Thou lovest me, but no longer as at first.”

My dear brother minister (the letter was addressed to the head of the Church, perhaps to Timotheus in particular), you are still preaching a full salvation, striving to win souls for Jesus. He blesses your work. And yet!—Have you the stifling feeling that your work is becoming mechanical? Your colleagues praise you, but there is One who loves you more than anyone else. One feels deeply when one loves. Does He say to you: “Thou lovest me no longer as at first?”

Can a man be full of the Holy Spirit and then lose his strength and go his own selfish way again? Alas, yes! Can a healthy man's hand become withered and useless? Is it possible for an anointed servant of Christ to lose his power and become useless? Alas, yes! Can the seal be broken? Even that is possible. Every blessing can be lost. But here it is not a question of a blessing or of a spiritual gift. The Holy Spirit is not a gift that is given

once for all; the Holy Spirit is a Person. How was it that Timotheus and the brethren in Ephesus no longer loved Jesus at first? Shall I tell you? The Holy Spirit had withdrawn Himself. He had not gone away altogether. Oh, no! He was in the attic again.

God has given the Holy Spirit "to them that obey him" (Acts 5:32). Absolute obedience is a necessary condition before the Holy Spirit can take up His abode in us, or if He is going to keep the control of your life. The Spirit must be the supreme guide of our life. Like St. Paul, you must obey His slightest word. St. Paul was not permitted to preach in Phrygia and Galatia, nor to travel through Mysia and Bithynia (Acts 16:6, 8). He lived and walked in the Spirit (Gal. 5:16). Would you remain long in a family where you had the unpleasant feeling that you were not wanted? The Holy Spirit does not thrust Himself upon anybody. If you take no notice of Him He will withdraw Himself.

But do you realize what this will mean to you? How much will you lose if the Holy Ghost ceases to control your life! You will no longer take delight in the presence of the Lord within you. Jesus will no longer be a reality in your life. You will no longer feel the nearness of your Saviour. God will fade from your sight into the distance. You will no longer have an inner call to prayer, and your prayers will lose their power. Your work will no longer

be a joy but a burden to you. You will do your work for the Master only from a feeling of duty, and will be satisfied when you carry it out mechanically. You will neglect your duty; your thoughts will become worldly, your imagination sullied, until the sinful thoughts turn into sinful acts. Sin stands ever before your door; the time will come when you will open the door to it.

Sin brings sorrow with it; sorrow for you and for all around you. Have you ever thought how Jesus suffers under your backslidings? Do not forget that He loves you. How He rejoiced on the day when you gave yourself to Him! Do you know that beautiful hymn by Monod with its three steps of consecration? The first stage is "All of self, and none of Thee." Then came the second stage: "Some of self, and some of Thee." And the third stage: "Less of self, and more of Thee," until at last you could sing:

*"Higher than the highest heavens,
Deeper than the deepest sea,
Lord, Thy love at last has conquered;
Grant me now my soul's petition—
'None of self, and all of Thee.'"*

Will you now retrace these steps, until—which God forbid—you get back to: "All of self, and none of Thee"? How that would grieve the Saviour's loving heart! His grief at your backsliding would be as great as His joy at your conversion.

What has He done to you that you should cause Him such pain? *Remember*, says the Lord, the state from which you have fallen. Memory is a wonderful thing. There are hours which one can never forget. The hour of your conversion and, even more, the hour when Jesus became not only your Saviour, but also your Master and your king—these hours remain unforgettable.

Do you not yearn after that glorious time when Jesus was the centre and the object of your life? I have good news for you: You can be restored through grace. God had called Abraham from Ur of the Chaldees and led him into the promised land of Canaan. God wanted to prove His child, and He sent a dearth into the land. Care filled the heart of the patriarch. "When worry fills the heart," said a deeply taught saint, "it drives out the Holy Spirit." Abraham went down into Egypt. The way of God's children leads upward, not downward. Anywhere, except in Egypt, Abraham left an altar behind him as a testimony. Outwardly everything seemed to be going well with him. He became very rich in cattle, silver and gold, and he brought Hagar with him out of Egypt. But he had lost the power of testimony. No altar was built in Egypt. How could Abraham find the way back to the life of the Spirit? God said to him: "*Return unto the place where thy tent was at the beginning*" (Gen. 13:3).

God gives His servants a second chance. He

gave St. Peter a second chance; likewise Jonah: "Then the word of the Lord came a second time unto Jonah." The prophet had disobeyed God, and had gone to Tarsus instead of going to Nineveh. But God did not expel him from His service. In His mercy, He gave His servant another chance. He forgives unto seventy times seven. How often He will give you another chance if you are disobedient, I cannot say. But if He comes to you now for the second time, show your gratitude and go at once to your Nineveh.

Naomi no longer wished to stay in Moab, especially after God had taken Elimelech from her. When she returned to Bethlehem He gave her more than she ever had. God giveth more grace (James 4:6). "Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works" (Rev. 2:4), He wrote to the Church. Do not expect merely the grace which has been shown you hitherto. Have faith, and you will receive more than you ever had before. He can strengthen you so that you will not fall again. Abraham did not go down again to Egypt, nor did Peter ever deny his Master again after the Lord had restored him to his former office.

You can lose the fulness of the Spirit. Therefore let Jesus be your keeper. If you lose it, Jesus can give it you again. Could you but see Him standing by you with outstretched arms, you would not let Him wait long in vain. Fall penitent at His

feet, tell Him where you have failed, tell Him that you want to go back to those glorious times when the Holy Spirit filled your whole house and that it is your dearest wish that His Spirit may once more take full possession of your soul and body. You will find that where sin abounds, grace doth much more abound (Rom. 5:20).

*“O Spirit of Faith and Love,
Work in our midst, we pray,
And purify each waiting heart;
Baptize us with pow’r today.”*

There is restoring grace.

XIII

GRIEVE NOT THE HOLY SPIRIT

Ephesians 4:30

THERE are three warning signals, written in letters of flame, which no traveller can pass with impunity: Grieve not—Quench not—Resist not. One cannot grieve a force. Only a person can be grieved. The Holy Spirit is just as much a person as the Saviour. We can grieve, quench and resist the Spirit.

To whom was this warning addressed? Was it for men who were unconverted? No, it was addressed to the saints at Ephesus, to men who believed in Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:1), to men who had been sealed with the Holy Spirit unto the day of redemption.

God's children can grieve the Holy Spirit. This is a solemn truth. You can grieve the Spirit much more than a worldly-minded person can do. If my own child grieves me, it is much more painful to me than if I am treated badly by a stranger. What are those wounds on Thy hands? He answers: "Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends" (Zech. 13:6). Such wounds hurt.

Peter's denial caused the Saviour more pain than the blows of the high priest's servant.

How can you grieve the Holy Spirit? May I remind you of the fact that the Holy Spirit dwells in you, that you are a temple of the Holy Spirit? Wherever you go the Holy Spirit goes with you. He hears every unkind, deceitful word you say, reads every letter you write, sees everything you do. Even the secret thoughts of your heart are not hidden from the Holy Spirit.

Sin grieves God's Spirit. The Spirit is a holy spirit and hates sin. The Spirit can never forget what it cost the Saviour to redeem us. Sin separates us from God; it hinders our growth in grace and darkens the image of Christ within us. If our life is not consistent with our words, God cannot use us, and this grieves God's Spirit. No good child would grieve the mother who had carried it beneath her heart. Do you realize something of the love and patience with which the Holy Spirit has followed you all your life, until at last you became the Lord's? No mother is so full of loving care as the Holy Spirit. Is there anything in your life that grieves God's Spirit?

Worldly mindedness grieves the Holy Spirit. "Be not conformed to this world" (Rom. 12:2). A worldly atmosphere is harmful to a child of God. Bunyan tells us how the speech, dress and manners of the pilgrims appeared strange among the throng in Vanity Fair. It is a sad thing when there is no

difference between us and the children of this world. Do you conduct your business as a child of this world or as a child of God? No men can serve two masters. Will you serve the world or Jesus? Sanctification means separation. "Be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you" (2 Cor. 6:17).

Revengeful, unkind thoughts grieve the Holy Spirit. The symbol of the Spirit is a dove, and this dove of peace can find no resting-place in a heart that is full of bitterness and backbiting (Gal. 5:15).

Party spirit and strife between God's people cause the Holy Spirit to withdraw Himself again to the attic. A reconciliation between brethren has more than once led to a revival.

Neglect grieves the Holy Spirit. Do not forget that Jesus sent the Spirit to be His representative. The Holy Spirit does not seek His own glory. His dearest wish is to glorify Jesus. How it must grieve the Spirit if you have no time for Jesus, if the Word is no longer the guiding light of your life, if you become indifferent and no longer employ all your powers and energy to win souls for Christ! Do you not think that it must pain the Spirit to find in you no desire to be ready for the second coming of the Lord?

Doubt and lack of faith grieve the Spirit. God has brought you safely thus far on your journey; are you going to begin to doubt His promises now?

Are you going to begin to be worried about your future? Do you think that your Father in heaven will forget you? If you only knew how you grieve the Holy Spirit with your lack of faith!

I repeat, I do not say that the Spirit will leave you altogether. He never does that. But He goes up into the attic again, and you lose strength and joy in your work. Will you not now examine yourself before God, and if you have grieved the Spirit in any of these ways, tell Him, and ask the Spirit to take full possession of you again. Believe me, this prayer will not go unheard, for it is according to God's will. Accept this in faith, even though you do not immediately feel that your prayer is answered.

"Quench not the spirit" (1 Thess. 5:19). This is the second warning. Do not forget that this warning is also a command, and demands obedience. We have seen how many of God's children grieve the Spirit; how widely spread this sin is! We cannot expect any revival in our own churches unless we first repent truly of our sins. When we grieve God's Spirit, we deeply wound the Father's heart and hinder the conversion of immortal souls.

No less terrible are the consequences if we quench the Spirit. Can one then quench the Spirit? God would not warn against this if it were not possible.

Thousands of God's children have lost the first love. The bride no longer yearns for the coming

of the bridegroom. She has become indifferent. In many, the love has grown cold. Once it was their greatest joy to hold communion with the Saviour; their prayers were full of strength, and were always heard. They were ready to sacrifice anything for Jesus. But now the Spirit is quenched.

The Spirit is fire. As John the Baptist was speaking of the baptism with the Spirit, he said: "I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire." When the Holy Spirit began His work on the day of Pentecost, He appeared on them like tongues of fire. "And it sat upon each of them" (Acts 2:3).

The fire in the upper chamber soon spread. Hard hearts melted like wax. This fire consumes all impurity, selfishness and worldly-mindedness—everything that could grieve the Master. The fire of love was kindled in every heart. In the early Church each disciple was a lamplighter. They that were scattered preached the word.

I close this chapter with a wish for each of my readers. I wish that we may all have a burning heart. May the Holy Spirit kindle the fire of love in each heart and may that fire never go out (Lev. 6:6).

Is it possible for the soul to grow cold? Just as easily as the body grows cold. The fire gradually

dies out; only embers and ashes are left. The ashes have to be removed, fresh fuel has to be put on the hearth. Newspapers and novels do not produce a lasting fire. Feed on the Word of God, fan the fire by the Spirit of prayer, and He who does not quench the smoking flax will by the Spirit's power cause the fire in your soul to burn brightly for the Master.

*"Come as the fire—and purge our hearts,
Like sacrificial flame;
Let our whole soul and off'ring be
To our Redeemer's name."*

XIV

RESIST NOT THE HOLY GHOST

Acts 7:51

DR. ANDREW MURRAY, the saintly servant of God in South Africa, published a little book in the year 1895, called *The Full Pentecostal Blessing*. If it is still to be had, I should like to recommend it to every pastor and Sunday School teacher. It has been the greatest help to me personally. In his book Dr. Murray brings us a simple but very important message. It is many years now since the Lord took him to Himself, but I think it may be of great benefit to many if I repeat his words now. God grant that every child of God who reads these words may put these truths to the test in his heart, meekly kneeling before God:

“The one thing that the Church needs, the one thing that all must strive after in unity of heart and purpose, is to be filled with the Spirit of God.

“It is God’s will that every one of His children should be filled with the Holy Spirit.

“It is impossible for the individual Christian or church to live and act as God wishes without first being filled with the Holy Spirit. Wherever one

goes today one sees that all too few of God's children possess or, alas, even desire this blessing.

"The blessing is ready for us when we will. Our faith may assure us of this with the utmost certainty.

"But the great obstacle that stands in its way is that the world and the pleasures of this life occupy the place which Christ ought to occupy.

"We cannot be filled with the Holy Spirit until we are prepared to submit ourselves to Jesus' guidance, to sell everything in order to buy the one pearl of great price."

So wrote Dr. Murray in 1895. His books have been a blessing to thousands. I repeat his words with a prayer that the seed sown may yield a glorious harvest. Dr. Torrey always insisted clearly and soberly on these glorious truths in his world-wide missions, and many of God's people received a new power in their lives through his message. There were conferences where men and women bowed down and repented of their sins. There was a cleansing among God's children. They allowed the Spirit, once more, full freedom to work among them. Thousands were converted in the years 1905 and 1906. We cannot say why the effects of the Spirit's work stopped then. The wind bloweth whithersoever it listeth. God's Spirit is sovereign. Since then there have been glorious periods of revival in Corea. My heart glowed when I heard the accounts of Missionary Goforth. Then again the Holy Spirit was able to do a great

work among the Scotch fishermen. I know from my own personal experience what glorious work God's Spirit has done there.

Why should not the Holy Spirit send us a revival, too? My brethren, we need new life in our churches. It hurts to touch the wounds in our church life. But I felt inwardly compelled to write these thoughts on the Holy Ghost and His work. These arose out of a humble conviction that many of Christ's servants, myself included, have grieved and quenched the Holy Spirit. The consciousness of this brings me to my knees in humility. I thank the Lord that He has so blessed my simple words that many have written that they have been a blessing to them. May every worker in God's vineyard ask himself: "Am *I* perhaps to blame that there are no conversions in my congregation?"

The fulness of the Spirit is given, in the first place, for service, even though our personality and our service influence one another mutually. You have the great privilege of working in the Lord's vineyard. The Holy Spirit is waiting to fill you, and to work in you and through you. Many workers in the kingdom of God have testified that their work has been doubly blessed since they were filled with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is ready to do the same for you if you will submit yourself absolutely to Him. Think of the immortal souls who could be saved through your ministry. Is it not a

sin to let God's Spirit wait in vain? "Quench not the spirit."

*"Thy Holy Spirit, Lord, alone
Can deeper love inspire;
His pow'r alone within our souls
Can light the sacred fire."*

"Wherefore I put thee in remembrance, that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands" (2 Tim. 1:6). Fan the flame! Your fire will burn as brightly as ever. But ashes now smother it, so that it can only glow. You and others have noticed it. You even begin to doubt whether the fire ever burnt, whether you were ever really filled with God's Spirit. Brother, the fire has not gone out. The flame must be fanned up again, and then you will once more become a flaming fire for the Saviour.

*"Revive Thy work, O Lord!
Give Pentecostal showers;
Be Thine the glory, Thine alone!
The blessing, Lord, be ours!"*

"Resist not the Holy Spirit" (Acts 7:51). This warning was first directed to the high priest and scribes. But it is worthy of all men's attention.

Every man who rejects this gift bears a terrible responsibility. God has done everything to make our salvation possible. Our sins are forgiven us. The Father longs for the return of the prodigal. The Saviour who died for us prays for us now as

our high priest. The Holy Spirit sends us light to show us the path of salvation. He gives us strength to make the one necessary step—to accept Jesus as our Saviour and Redeemer. God is ready. The hand of grace is stretched out to us; only man resists.

God has allowed man the power of resisting the Spirit of God. Man can say “No!” to his God. God never limits our free will; it is a terrible responsibility. God offers you His hand; you can choose whether you will take it or not. We shall never be able to explain perfectly the changes in the human heart. Life and its origin are secrets. The life from above is also a secret. In conversion there is a divine side and also a human side. There is regenerating grace without which we can do nothing, but this grace does not force us. You must accept the grace of your own free will. If you have not done so already, will you not do so now? Throw yourself into the loving arms of the Saviour who said: “Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out” (John 6:37). You can resist the Holy Spirit. Many a church is doing so, and conversions in them are almost unknown. The light is taken away from them. Here and there men and women resist the Spirit, their hearts grow cold, they lose spiritual strength, and become a burden to those around them. Many a Christian worker also resists the Spirit, toils and labours in vain until the Master says: “Take that is thine, and go thy

way;" take your tools home with you—I have no work for you tomorrow (Matt. 20:14). The sinner resists, and, if he continues obstinate, he is lost utterly.

Resist no longer. The word "resist" sounds sad to our ears. And yet it can shed a ray of light in our hearts. Resisting implies something which we resist. The Spirit is working, striving for our salvation. He waits ready to bless us. Cease to resist, O child of God, and you will receive the fullness of the Spirit. Cease to resist, you who are not yet saved, and you may today become a happy child of God (Ezek. 33:11).

Is there a sin against the Holy Spirit which shall not be forgiven? Certainly, for the Saviour speaks of it Himself in St. Matthew 12:31. I have received so many letters from children of God who have been driven almost to despair because Satan has whispered to them that they have committed the unpardonable sin. Satan was always a liar. If he cannot destroy our souls, he seeks to destroy our happiness. Then what is the sin against the Spirit? It is blasphemy against the Spirit. It is wittingly to ascribe the works of God's Spirit to the devil.

The scribes dared to maintain that our beloved Lord and Saviour was possessed of Beelzebub, "and by the prince of the devils casteth he out devils" (Mark 3:22). This is the blasphemy against the Spirit which shall not be forgiven. My

brother in distress, if the devil tells you that you have committed the sin against the Holy Spirit and will therefore find no forgiveness, answer him that you may have committed many sins which are as red as blood, but that he lies when he accuses you of this sin, for you can say, in perfect truth, that you have never thought of maintaining that our Saviour performed His miracles through the power of the devil.

But does it not say, in Hebrews 6:6, that it is impossible, for those who were once enlightened and have tasted of the heavenly gift, . . . to renew them again unto repentance? Satan has misused these words, saying to men: "This means you. You have been enlightened, and now there is no help for you." Satan is delighted if he can bring us to doubt God's love and grace. To whom, then, does the writer direct this warning? We must not take any Bible passage out of its context. This warning was directed to Jewish Christians who were in danger of becoming apostate, of giving up Jesus, and of returning to the Jewish religion. We are dealing here with men who reject Jesus, who turn their backs on Him absolutely. For such men there is no hope; for there is only one name given unto mortals by which we can be saved. Without Jesus there is no salvation, no redemption. I have helped many a soul in despair by telling them to change the words: "If they shall fall away," at the beginning of Hebrews 6:6, into "As long as they

fall away." *The very fact that a man longs for Jesus and is unhappy in the thought that Jesus could have cast him out, is a proof that Hebrews 6:6 does not apply to him.*

No sin is too great to be washed away by the blood of Jesus. St. Peter had sunk low, but Jesus did not cast him out. "Where sin is mighty, grace is also mighty." God preserve us from sinning wilfully (Heb. 10:26). He who rejects Jesus, sins wilfully. "He who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." The Holy Spirit says: "To-day!" God grant that at least one soul may fall into the loving arms of Jesus while reading this book. I repeat once more: "He who comes to Jesus will not be cast out" (John 6:37).

Grieve not the Spirit. Quench not the Spirit. Cease to resist. From that moment you will shed blessings on all around you. Now, while you read, you may become full of the Spirit. We read of Jacob at the ford Jabbok: "And he blessed him there" (Gen. 32:30). At this very moment, wherever you may be, you can be saved. Cease to fight with your God, surrender yourself utterly. You will enter into peace.

I was once at a conference in Holland where the Lord had mightily blessed His work. A brother wrote to me: "Till now I have had only cheques, but the Lord changed them into cash, and now I hold the glittering gold in my hands. Jesus has come to mean more and more to us, as I and many

others can testify." What was the secret of this blessing? The founder of the little chapel had written on it, as an inscription: "Jehovah Sham-mah": the Lord is here. The Lord Himself blessed it.

Mendelssohn once visited a cathedral which contained one of the most valuable organs in Europe. He listened to the playing of the organ, then he went up to the organ-loft and asked the organist for permission to play it. "I do not know you," was the reply, "and we do not allow any chance stranger to play upon this organ." The great musician waited patiently, and at last he persuaded the man to let him play. Mendelssohn sat down at the organ, his fingers glided over the keys, his feet touched the pedals, and the great cathedral was filled with such music as the organist had never heard before. With tears in his eyes, he laid his hand on Mendelssohn's shoulder. "Who are you?" he asked. "Mendelssohn," was the brief answer. The old organist was dumbfounded. "To think that an old fool like myself nearly forbade Mendelssohn to play upon our organ!"

If you only knew what wondrous harmonies Jesus could bring forth from you, would you but allow His pierced hands to touch the keys? Traces of blood would remain behind on the keys, but instead of harsh tones He would produce melodies such as you have never dreamed of. Do you know that He is standing beside you, looking at you full

of love, while you are reading this book? Do you know that He is waiting, patiently waiting, His hands ready to touch the keys? Is He a stranger to you that you will not allow Him to play upon your soul's instrument because other lords have the mastery over you?

He is waiting for you to hand Him the keys, Him the great artist, the maker of your precious instrument. Will you do it now? Then it may be said of you, as of Jacob: "And the Lord blessed him there."

XV

THE FRUIT OF THE SPIRIT

Hebrews 12:14

FOLLOW peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." These words are full of significance for believers, for who does not yearn to see the Lord? The word "holiness" is often misused. The devil says holiness means freedom from sin, and, as you know you are not free from sin, he deprives you of hope and happiness.

Holiness does not imply freedom from sin; it implies separation. The Corinthians were "saints in Christ," but 1 Corinthians 3 shows you that they were not without sin. The vessels of the tabernacle were holy—*i. e.*, set aside for special use, to be used only in the tabernacle; but they were not free from sin. The fact that a vessel was consecrated did not turn an iron vessel into a gold one. The word "holiness" is used in three ways in the Bible. As in conversion, so in sanctification there are two aspects, the human and the divine.

A number of passages in the Bible demand that we should sanctify ourselves. "Ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves" (Lev. 11:44). "Be ye clean,

that bear the vessels of the Lord ” (Isa. 52:11). “ Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit ” (2 Cor. 7:1). “ Yield yourselves unto God ” (Rom. 6:13). “ Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God ” (Rom. 12:1). This is the human side.

God demands that we should keep from conscious sin, that we should give ourselves willingly to Him, that we should cease to fight against God; this is surrender. It is a great hour in our lives, the hour of surrender to God. God has come to mean so much to you that you desire henceforward to give Him only joy. Since you have given yourself to Him, you need have no doubt that He has immediately accepted your surrender. He has been waiting for it. Now you can say: “ I am no longer my own; I have given myself to the Lord.” The mastery is His, and His peace rules in your heart. Have you experienced this great change?

Naturally, you cannot keep on giving the same thing. It is a sound principle: Once given, given for always. You should constantly remind yourself: I am no longer my own. I have no right to dispose of my time, my gifts, my money, as I think best. I am His whom I serve. This surrender and self-devotion is the human side of sanctification. I take up a new position to my Saviour, and I must remain in that position.

“ *We all . . . are changed into the same image from glory to glory* ” (2 Cor. 3:18). “ For both

he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one" (Heb. 2:11). "For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified" (Heb. 10:14).

These Bible passages show the divine side of sanctification: they are all passive. *We can no more sanctify ourselves than we can convert ourselves.* "It is God, working within you, who causes both to will and to do according to his good pleasure." From the moment when you surrender yourself to God and cease to try and improve yourself by fighting in the strength of your new nature, from that moment God's Spirit begins secretly to transform you into the image of Christ, and this work never ceases. The new birth is the work of a moment; sanctification is the work of a lifetime. Believe that the Spirit is at work, even if you do not feel His work. God's work is silent.

Now, there is a third series of Bible passages. When you submit yourself to God you ought not to doubt that He will lead you farther. And yet you say: "I certainly strive to free myself from conscious sin; but even so my character cannot suddenly become different." This is true. *The Holy Spirit still has work to do in us until our life's end.* The thief on the cross gave himself to the Saviour; that was the human side of sanctification. The Holy Spirit had a very short time to complete his sanctification. Even death could not alter his character. Had the Holy Spirit time to finish the

task? But we will not bother ourselves about the thief. We are only too conscious that we ourselves are not yet perfect. Think of the passage at the beginning of this chapter. Without holiness no one shall see the Lord. We tremble at these words. My brethren, there is a third group of Bible passages concerning sanctification, the most glorious of all.

“ Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us . . . sanctification ” (1 Cor. 1:30). In His prayer for glorification Jesus said: “ For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth ” (John 17:19).

Sanctification, in the full sense of the word, is also a gift. Forgiveness alone is not enough. Peace alone is not enough. We must also be sanctified.

God gives what He demands from us. He is the God of all grace. We are saved through grace. We find in Jesus all that we need. That is why Jesus was sent as our Saviour. Sanctification is one of the most glorious of God's gifts. Our Saviour is not only the righteous One; He is also the holy One. He dwells in us in the Spirit through faith. His obedience was absolute, His devotion perfect. His complete sacrifice makes up for our shortcomings. We find favour in God's sight through His beloved Son, and His sanctification is our sanctification.

Practical holiness is often spoken of in the Bible

as *fruit*. Later on I shall say something more about the second group of Bible passages, about what the Holy Spirit works within us, provided we submit ourselves in perfect faith and obedience.

The fruit is formed out of the concentrated juices of the tree; it is the result of the activity of the internal life. The purpose of the tree is achieved when the fruit is ripe. Our holiness is our fruit. It is not there for us to take delight in. Holiness is practical. It is that side of our spiritual life through which we can serve others. We ought to live for others. That is our task. The fruit is not for the branch; it would rot on the branch. It is for the gardener. He gathers the fruit and delights in it. Have you caused the gardener joy? "Herein is my father glorified," says Jesus, "that ye bear much fruit" (John 15:8).

Have you ever considered that a tree that bears no fruit has really no right to exist? It only takes up room that might be better employed. We have had a cherry tree removed from our garden. It hardly had any cherries, and the sparrows ate the few that it did bear. "Cut it down," said the gardener. Are you a fruitful tree? Do you fulfil your purpose?

Practical holiness cannot be manufactured. Artificial flowers used to be very popular, in the country, in Holland. They were made of wax and looked very like real flowers. I have never known

bees to be deceived by them. Just as salvation through self-culture is preached today by many, so there is also self-sanctification. Men try to imitate Christ in their own strength. A good imitation is not enough. Self-made holiness will not do. There is all the difference between life and death.

A crystal is dead. It may increase in size, but that is not growth. A living organism grows from within. The moralist is like a crystal; he may be full of beauty and wonder. The moral man may be full of good works; but these are not fruit.

If I tie grapes to an old umbrella, the umbrella does not turn into a vine. Practical holiness does not begin with doing but with being. It cannot be built up like a house; it grows from within, and Jesus is the life-force within us.

One can be full of good works without being fruitful (Col. 1:10). *Fruitful good works will only be found where there is inward life.* I remember how at an after-meeting I once asked a young deaconess to assist. Tears came into her eyes: "I have not yet received the Saviour myself. How can I help others?" She then told me how she had lost father, mother and two grown-up brothers in one year, and had then said to herself, in her despair: "You must prepare yourself for death and become a deaconess." She was industrious and faithful, and performed many good works. But the works were dead, for there was no germ of life within her.

Of course, practical holiness must have its origin. But the origin is not in the natural man. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh" (John 3:6). A bad tree cannot bring forth good fruit. But it is also important to realize that the fruit is not the product of our own new nature either. The vine bears grapes; but the grapes do not have their origin in the vine but in the roots. The words that we speak, the prayers, the deeds that spring from our life of self, have no life-germ in them.

How important it is for us to understand more and more deeply our Saviour's words: "Without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5)! Have you observed the difference between motor cars and electric cars? A motor car has a moving force in it; a street car can only move when in connection with the central source of power. When you are converted you receive the moving force not from yourself but from Jesus within you. A candle has a light of its own; when it is lighted it goes on burning until it is all used up. Then it flickers and goes out. The electric light burns as long as there is an electric current and it remains in contact with the main. You are not a candle but an electric light bulb. One party to which you can never belong is the Independent party.

The new birth is necessary in order to bear fruit, but it is not the origin of it. Consider the words: "From me is thy fruit found" (Hos. 14:9). "For with thee is the fountain of life" (Ps. 36:9). Not

with us, nor *with our new nature*. Jesus Christ is our life. "I am the way, the truth and the life." God has given us eternal life, and this life *is in His Son*. Through faith we receive eternal life as a gift, but not as a gift apart from Jesus; we receive eternal life when we accept Jesus. The fountain within us (John 4:10) is Jesus, glorified in us through the Holy Spirit. And so St. Paul says: "Not I (although born again and redeemed) live, but Christ liveth in me" (Gal. 2:20). There is no spiritual life in our old nature; it is of no value, either before or after conversion. Our new nature is not what the publishers would call an improved edition of the old; it is a realization through faith of the glorious fact: "Christ liveth in me!" Christ causes me to bear fruit. He is the true vine; He is the Holy Spirit which draws the juices from the roots up to the grapes. Therefore the apostle in Galatians 5:22 does not speak of the fruit of our old or new nature; he speaks of *the fruit of the Spirit*.

We must always remember that nothing good dwelleth in our flesh. Nor can any good come of it. Once we have grasped this truth, we shall stop trying to patch up our old self for people to admire. There is nothing in our old nature by which we can come in contact with God. He must create something new in us. It is therefore necessary that we should dissociate ourselves from our old life of self. The devil says: "Spare your life." Jesus

gave His, that many might be saved. The devil does all he can to strengthen our self-life, but there is only one place for self; that is the cross.

If you really honestly mean to follow in Jesus' footsteps, you will find a thousand opportunities by the way to cast away your self-life. Practical holiness carries on its banner the motto: "Nothing for myself!" Then you will find joy in living for others, in making room for others. You can yield. You will learn humility and to be silent. Lambs do not defend themselves. You will no longer be an obstacle to your unconverted relatives through your old nature; you will open in their hearts a path for Jesus. No sacrifice is too great for Jesus. In Jesus' school you have learned a new grammar. The first person is "He," the second "you," and in the third place comes "I." The fruit is not for the tree; it is for the gardener.

We have now considered many things together concerning the Holy Spirit and His work in the hearts of those who truly desire it. I am almost sorry to lay down my pen. What does the Holy Spirit effect in us? He creates in us a new character. Character is more important than words, even than acts. In God's eyes the important thing is not what we say or do, but what we are. How often one hears believers say: "It is my nature to do so." We are not born with a fixed nature or character. Character is the result of our habits, and these are repeated actions. If we now begin

to allow the Spirit to guide our lives, we shall get a new character. This is the fruit of the Spirit.

The works of the flesh are many; *there is only one fruit of the Spirit*. It is not as though one child of God bore only love as fruit, another patience, and so on. There is only one fruit of the Spirit, just as the beatitudes do not describe different people, but only the one, true disciple of Jesus, illustrated from different points of view.

This fruit of the Spirit manifests itself in nine ways; one might also say that the fruit is threefold according to our relationship to God, to our fellow-men and to ourselves. Love, joy, peace in our communion with God, who is the source of our love, the cause of our joy and from whom comes all peace. When we live in His mysterious presence our character will display patience, kindness and goodness to those around us, and will bear the stamp of faith, meekness and chastity.

The fruit of the Spirit is love; for the love of God is poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit. God's love is immeasurable, deeper than the deepest sea. Mother-love is perhaps the purest love upon earth for it is the most selfless. God's love is greater than mother-love. The world is sick for want of love. Your children yearn for love. The overflowing love of Jesus will spring up in your heart, love for the Father, love for those around you, love for those who are lost, love which loveth unto the end (John 13:1). Our Saviour was

anointed with the oil of joy, and naturally He shares it with His disciples. This joy is infectious. It strives to make those around us joyful, too. It is an everlasting joy (Ezek. 35:10). It remains in the heart in the midst of the greatest hardships. Your face will shine. Like St. Paul, you will finish your course with joy to enter the unspeakable joy of the Lord.

The heart in which love for God and mankind dwells, which is full of inexpressible joy because Jesus dwells in it, knows an inward peace that passeth all understanding, which preserves our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (Phil. 4:7).

We shall learn patience towards our fellows, the patience of Christ. Patience is suffering, forbearing love. We learn to bear and to forbear. We become ready to yield. First we give ourselves to the Lord and then to the brethren. We practice kindness and courtesy not only to those who are over us, but also to our subordinates. A kind word is never out of place. I should think that all, great and small, rejoiced when Jesus entered a house. Of a dear friend, long since with the Lord, it used commonly to be said: "He has a kind word for everyone."

Faithfulness or reliability, meekness and self-control are the last properties of the fruit of the Spirit. One can rely on your word. You are to be depended upon in your daily business. Letters are answered. Bills punctually paid. The interests of

your workmen are as important to you as your own. You are just, considerate and polite towards your subordinates. You concern yourself with their interests and their family affairs. You owe no man anything (Rom. 13:8). You do not desire to command in your church or community, but are happy to be a servant for Jesus' sake. On no account would you thrust yourself forward. Above all, you practise chastity, watching and praying over words and deeds and habits, over bed and table, over the books you read and the friends you make, over your thoughts and your tongue (1 Cor. 9:27). By constant devotion you keep under your body, as a living sacrifice well pleasing unto the Lord (Rom. 12:1). The body for the Lord, and the Lord for the body (1 Cor. 6:13).

The Holy Spirit is ready to cause you to bear this fruit also. A life of overflowing plenty will be your lot. You will become a blessing to all around you. Out of the weakest, most imperfect of God's children, the Holy Spirit is capable of making something to the glory of God, a vessel meet for the Master's use.

With God's help I have tried to awaken in you a desire for the fulness of the Spirit. For you, too, is the power of the Spirit there. But the Holy Spirit can only take full possession of you if you are ready to make room for Him in your life in perfect faith and obedience. The Spirit can do nothing unless you surrender yourself.

In a museum in Genoa there is a room where a valuable violin is kept behind glass. The guide says: "This violin belonged to Paganini." You imagine to yourself what wonderful tones the great artist would conjure forth from the violin. Dear brethren, even a Paganini is powerless as long as the violin hangs behind the pane of glass.

I have reached the end of this chapter. My word have been a blessing to many. To you, too? Have you received the power and fulness of the Spirit into your life? Gladly would I add more, but I cannot. Let the Holy Spirit, the Paraclete and Comforter, speak the last words!

*"O Holy Ghost, Thy people bless
Who long to feel Thy might,
And fain would grow in holiness
As children of the light.*

*"To Thee we bring, who art the Lord,
Ourselves to be Thy throne;
Let ev'ry thought, and deed, and word
Thy pure dominion own.*

*"O Holy Ghost, of sevenfold might,
All graces come from Thee;
Grant us to know and serve aright
One God in Person Three."*

And the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost be with us all! Amen.

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